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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WHHI FUNDING WILL HELP ENHANCE SERVICES FOR THE HOMELESS IN ST. BONIFACE

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA — The Centre Flavie Laurent will develop a new used furniture distribution depot and expand community outreach to enhance services for homeless or at risk individuals and families in St. Boniface, with the help of \$319,673 in funding from the Government of Canada, the Province of Manitoba and the City of Winnipeg through the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative (WHHI).

Funding for these projects is being provided to the Catholic Health Corporation of Manitoba (CHCM) under the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI), the central component of the Government of Canada's National Homelessness Initiative (NHI). The attached backgrounder will provide details about these projects.

The Honourable Greg Selinger, Manitoba Minister of Finance and Minister Responsible for French Language Services, on behalf of the Honourable Christine Melnick, Manitoba Minister of Family Services and Housing; the Honourable Raymond Simard, Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, on behalf of the Honourable Joe Fontana, Minister of Labour and Housing; and Franco Magnifico, Councillor for St. Boniface Ward on behalf of Winnipeg Mayor Sam Katz, participated in today's official announcement at the Centre Flavie Laurent, 196 Provencher Boulevard.

“This important assistance, through the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative, will further improve the key efforts of those associated with Centre Flavie Laurent,” said Selinger. “These efforts will support youth and families to achieve their fullest potential and also reflect our balanced approach of working cooperatively with local groups, on goals that are community-based.”

“Through the dedication and hard work of the many volunteers, Centre Flavie Laurent has been able to provide this valuable service to the St. Boniface community for over six years,” said Simard. “Now, thanks to this funding from the National Homelessness Initiative, the Centre will be in a better position to continue helping a greater number of people in need.”

“Centre Flavie Laurent provides a very important service to St. Boniface area residents,” said Councillor Magnifico. “By amalgamating services and providing for new outreach activities, this morning’s announcement will go a long way in helping those individuals in our community who are homeless, or who are at risk of becoming homeless.”

“The Catholic Health Corporation of Manitoba is happy to sponsor these two projects”, said Raymond Lafond, General Manager. “We want to help those in needs by following our founders’ tradition, the Grey Nuns and the Benedictines Nuns, and by giving priority to the health sector. This is the heritage our founders and ancestors left us and that the Canadians are adamant about.”

The Government of Canada launched the NHI in December 1999 to support communities’ efforts to alleviate homelessness. Between 1999 and 2006, \$1.15 billion will have been invested as part of the federal government’s commitment to addressing homelessness in Canada. To date in Winnipeg alone, 178 projects, representing an investment of close to \$30 million, have been either developed or approved to proceed. Funding for this project was provided for in the 2005 federal Budget.

Funding is coordinated through the WHHI, a partnership established by the Government of Canada, the Province of Manitoba and the City of Winnipeg to address homelessness, the declining housing stock and the revitalization of Winnipeg's older neighbourhoods. Located at 361 Hargrave Street, the WHHI serves as a single-window office for community organizations to access information on government-funded housing and homelessness programs. Community groups wanting more information on programs can call the WHHI at (204) 940-3070.

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BACKGROUND

Funding for the projects below is provided under the Government of Canada's National Homelessness Initiative (NHI) to the Catholic Health Corporation of Manitoba:

Centre Flavie Laurent – NHI \$240,000

- This contribution will help the Centre Flavie Laurent buy and renovate a building and relocate its distribution centre to one central location. Currently, the Centre provides free furniture, household goods and clothing to clients out of four different locations in St. Boniface. Through the generous support of the community, donated items are provided at no cost to low income families, the homeless and those who are at risk of becoming homeless, primarily, but not restricted, to the residents of the St. Boniface district in the city of Winnipeg. The majority of requests for goods are received through various community groups, institutions and agencies.
- The new depot will enhance the Centre Flavie Laurent's ability to assist homeless people or those at risk of homelessness stabilize their living arrangements and help them become independent. The Centre will also employ a full-time Coordinator to manage daily activities, coordinate volunteer efforts, set up an efficient database, and seek ongoing funding.
- Total project cost is \$423,485.

Community Outreach – NHI \$79,673

- This contribution will enable the Centre to hire a Youth Outreach Worker and Service Coordinator to work with local youth and agencies to mobilize community groups and stakeholders to address early intervention strategies for homelessness in the community of St. Boniface. The goal is to implement the priorities outlined in the St. Boniface Community Strategic Plan through better coordination of existing services and the building of new partnerships between community groups and the business community dealing with homeless or at risk individuals and families.
- Total Project Cost: \$142,853

The Catholic Health Corporation of Manitoba (CHCM) is an organization that sponsors holistic health care for individuals, families and communities in a tradition of enduring care and compassion. The CHCM came into existence on October 5, 2000 when the Grey Nuns of Manitoba officially transferred the stewardship, governance and ownership of their health care works to the newly established Corporation. These health care works were Sara Riel, Taché Centre, Foyer Valade, St. Amant Centre, Youville Centre (Saint Boniface and Saint Vital locations), Centre de Santé de Saint Boniface, St. Boniface General Hospital, and Ste. Rose General Hospital. In 2003, the Sisters of the Order of St. Benedict also transferred to CHCM St. Joseph's Residence and Winnipegosis & District Health Center.