

Episcopal Charities Tribute Dinner
Cathedral of St. John the Divine
Tuesday November 29, 2011

Dennis M. Nally's Remarks

I am very humbled to be recognized by such a respected and valued organization as Episcopal Charities.

For those of you who know me, you know that being the recipient of an individual honor is a bit different for me since I always try to encourage the "team first" philosophy. So to me the real acknowledgment tonight belongs to the work being done by a tremendous team -Episcopal Charities.

First off, I want to acknowledge the great efforts by the dinner chairs -Gary Giglio and John Sargent -as well as the Co-Chairs. Also the excellent efforts of Mary Beth and the team at Episcopal Charities. A terrific job by all. I also want to express my congratulations to my co-honorees -Bishop and Mrs. Donovan.

As for myself, I also have to admit it is a real pleasure to be asked to speak for a few minutes about something other than economic issues or impending regulatory developments. And for those of you in financial services, you know exactly what I'm referring to.

As you know through your own efforts, community and charitable work is very rewarding -but it can also be frustrating at times and sometimes it's hard to see much progress -until you get that unexpected visit, or call, or note explaining how your contribution made a real difference.

That's what this is all about -giving -and making a difference.

Each of you here this evening -through your own generous efforts -has made a real difference. Reaffirming the wonderful spirit of St. Paul who in one of his best known arguments -declared that charity is the greatest Christian virtue of all.

So this dinner is not about celebrating individual accomplishments. Rather, it's about our collective efforts in serving our communities and our fellow men and women. That is why the efforts of Episcopal Charities are so important. This really came alive for me this past weekend as I read a number of great accounts describing all the holiday dinners being prepared for the homeless and the homebound.

In fact, I often think how blessed I am: a great wife; four special children and two incredible grandchildren; a dream job that keeps me energized and challenged.

However, I must admit, that as I travel around the world, I am also struck by how fortunate I am. Whether it's Nairobi, Calcutta, or Bangkok, I see first-hand the challenges and issues that many are faced with. Challenges that most of us will never have to deal with. And that's why the work of Episcopal Charities is making a difference.

Episcopal Charities addresses the essential needs of those who are less fortunate or marginalized -whether they be the hungry, the ill, the elderly, or disadvantaged youth. And it demonstrates that the response to human suffering and need should not be limited to any one denomination or people.

But what is most impressive, is that Episcopal Charities does this every day - reaching out to the most vulnerable members of our communities with programs that address feeding, education, and homelessness.

For those of us so fortunate and with so many opportunities, to be without hope may be hard to grasp. But I think all of us would agree that no one - under any circumstance -should ever be deprived of all hope. After all, it may be all they have.

And that is our challenge. We have an obligation to help those that are struggling, whose ties to hope are tenuous at best and whose numbers are, in fact, increasing.

Clearly, all of you understand that obligation -that's why we're here tonight. In most of my speaking opportunities, I'm told I have the annoying habit of closing with an "ask" of the audience. So here is my ask of you. We are now

entering a very special time of the year -the holiday season. Good cheer, warm greetings, and special celebrations with our families and friends. I'm sure that your holiday "to-do" list -like mine -is already very long. But I would ask you to consider adding one more item to your list. And that is, as we approach the holidays, do whatever you can to spread a little more hope to those in need.

If you are in doubt about how best to do that -I know our friends here at Episcopal Charities will be able to provide some guidance. Through Episcopal Charities we can help others help themselves. Giving them the hope that somebody out there really cares -and that tomorrow is a new day.

Let me close by sharing a quote by Norman MacEwan: "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."

Once again, I greatly appreciate this honor. Thank you for being here tonight and thank you for your generous support of Episcopal Charities.
