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Contact: Maria Aselage, Director of Media Relations

(843) 513-7605 ~ maria@charlestdiocese.org

St. Clare's Home commemorates its first anniversary

GREENVILLE, S.C. – With a mission of saving lives and restoring hope, St. Clare's Home is celebrating its first anniversary. The maternity home is for women experiencing a crisis pregnancy, and in some instances, their children. Since opening its doors one year ago, St. Clare's Home has served ten mothers and six children and welcomed four babies into the world. Religious sisters from an order in Nigeria, the Sisters of St. Michael the Archangel, operate the home. They and the staff provide support, education, and care in a nurturing Catholic environment.

"We feel so blessed to be able to help moms and babies in need," said Kathy Schmutge, senior director of the Office of Family Life. "We credit our success to God and the many people who have supported us from the home's inception to its opening to this important anniversary."

St. Clare's Home is a safe place where expectant mothers can live while they are pregnant and remain at least through their baby's first birthday. While living at the home, residents learn life and parenting skills and have the opportunity to further their education at either a high school or college level. At the end of their stay, residents have been allowed to obtain the skills to care for themselves and their child or children.

Several months ago, one young pregnant woman reached out to St. Clare's Home in desperation. She was pregnant, her fiancé was in jail, she held a minimum wage job, and her home was infested with bed bugs. After moving into St. Clare's, this mom-to-be started taking life skills classes at the home and professional classes online. After her daughter was born, she qualified to be a medical administrative office assistant. A few months later, the criminal charges against her fiancé were dropped and she and her baby went to live with him. She left St. Clare's Home with the education to attain a better job and the skills to take care of herself and her child.

In addition to housing women and their children, St. Clare's Home has aided countless moms at its outreach centers with clothing, diapers, and cribs. Moreover, it has assisted them with lodging, furniture, and other support.

These success stories could not happen without support from the community. St. Clare's Home functions on the generosity of others. "We are always grateful to those who assist us," said Valerie Baronkin, executive director of St. Clare's Home. "Folks can help our moms and children by contributing money or purchasing items on our Amazon wish list. Of course, prayers for our residents and staff are most important. We can't do this without God and His divine blessings."

Those interested in learning more about St. Clare's Home are encouraged to visit its website at

www.stclareshomesc.org.

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