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ART FOR CHARITY

While the 330 attendees at the annual Catholic Charities Benefit and Gala ate and socialized, Father Bruno Segatta painted. During the course of the dinner and auction, he started and finished a scene from the musical *Les Misérables*. The painting sold for about \$2,500.

(ICR photo/Vero Gutierrez)

'BABY WHISPERER' MONSIGNOR SCHUMACHER

by Emily Woodham
Staff Writer

Longtime Diocese of Boise priest Monsignor Andy Schumacher was presented Catholic Charities of Idaho's highest honor at the organization's annual benefit gala attended by about 330 at the Boise Centre on Feb. 23.

The Bishop Michael Patrick Driscoll is named after the late former Diocese of Boise bishop who founded Catholic Charities of Idaho in 2000 and was known for his commitment to the social mission of the Church.

At this, the 12th annual gala for Catholic Charities, Monsignor Schumacher was honored for his 59 years of service as a priest, particularly for his ministry to couples hoping for children.

Catholic Charities Board Chair Laura Alvarez Schrag highlighted Monsignor Schumacher's reputation as a "baby whisperer," whose prayers for couples who have trouble conceiving are uncannily successful. And when, despite prayer, couples could not conceive, Monsignor Schumacher would help with adoptions.

Initially, Monsignor Schumacher worked with the adoption agency connected to Catholic Charities in Spokane. When that agency closed, he organized a way to arrange adoptions by coordinating through a lawyer and doctors. His ministry to couples through adoption lasted from 1964 until 1978.

"My suggestion to pastors today: Give to the poor and you will survive well," Monsignor Schumacher said in his brief remarks. When Bishop Driscoll founded Catholic Charities of Idaho in 2000, he appointed Monsignor Schumacher to its board where he served for 10 years.

Monsignor Schumacher, now retired and living in Lewiston, encouraged those in his parishes to have the same compassion and generosity to the poor. Wherever he served as pastor, he implemented a policy of giving to the poor 10 percent of all income received in offering envelopes. Though some parish finance councils resisted the idea, he responded, "We must place our trust in God." As parishes gave, they would find their finances improved, he said.

"I've never been short of money when working with a parish with that particular approach," he said.

More recently, Monsignor Schumacher has donated all the proceeds from his recently published autobiography to Catholic Charities. His book, "*I Have Come to Serve, and Not to Be Served,*" has raised \$8,000 for Catholic Charities thus far.

Monsignor Schumacher is a strong supporter of Vatican II, an advocate for young single mothers, and a true servant-leader, Schrag said. A note from his sister, Rose, was read aloud, in which she said that he kept their family united with his care, singing and excellent cooking skills.

The theme of the annual banquet is "Share the Journey," replicating Pope Francis' effort to urge Catholics to support refugees and migrants.

"As a context for tonight's award: Pope Francis in his exhortation *The Joy of the Gospel* has called upon the Church to recover the freshness of the Christian message," Schrag said. "The Holy Father emphasizes espe-



From left, Doug Alles, executive director of Catholic Charities of Idaho, Monsignor Andy Schumacher, and CCI Board Chair Laura Álvarez Schrag. (ICR photo/Vero Gutiérrez)



Father Bruno Segatta painting during the gala. (ICR photo/ Vero Gutiérrez)



From left, Ralph May, executive director of the Southwest Idaho Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Ron and Kathy Lauer, and Teresa May. (ICR photo/ Vero Gutiérrez)

ees to give to continue the work of healing at CCI.

Father Bruno Segatta, sacramental minister at Our Lady of the Rosary Parish in Boise, delighted everyone as he painted a work of art throughout the evening. The piece was based on "The Well Scene" from the musical *Les Misérables*, when Jean Valjean discovers Cosette carrying heavy pails of water in the woods. He takes the pails and carries them for her, and then he rescues her from her abusive guardians. Like Jean Valjean, Catholic Charities goes into the dark forest to people who have no hope and carries their heavy burdens, Father Bruno said. The artwork garnered \$2,600 for CCI.

CCI also recognized two benefactors who have donated generously through their estates: Ysidora Smith,

who passed away last March, and Bishop Michael Driscoll, who passed away in October 2017.

Catholic Charities' headquarters on West Franklin Road in Boise is to be named the Ysidora Smith Service Center, and the multipurpose room at the center is planned to be named the Bishop Driscoll Conference Room. An event to formally honor these donors is being planned for later in the year.

"We are very pleased with our program this year, which included the opportunity to honor Monsignor Andy and for our guests to enjoy a wonderful social event filled with fellowship, food and music," Alles said. "I truly believe that all of our guests left with a closer connection to the work we do, and with a better understanding of those we serve."

HONORED AT ANNUAL CATHOLIC CHARITIES GALA



Rourke O'Brien holds up his bid during the auction at the Catholic Charities Gala. At his side is his wife, Sayoko Kuwahara. (ICR photo/Vero Gutiérrez)



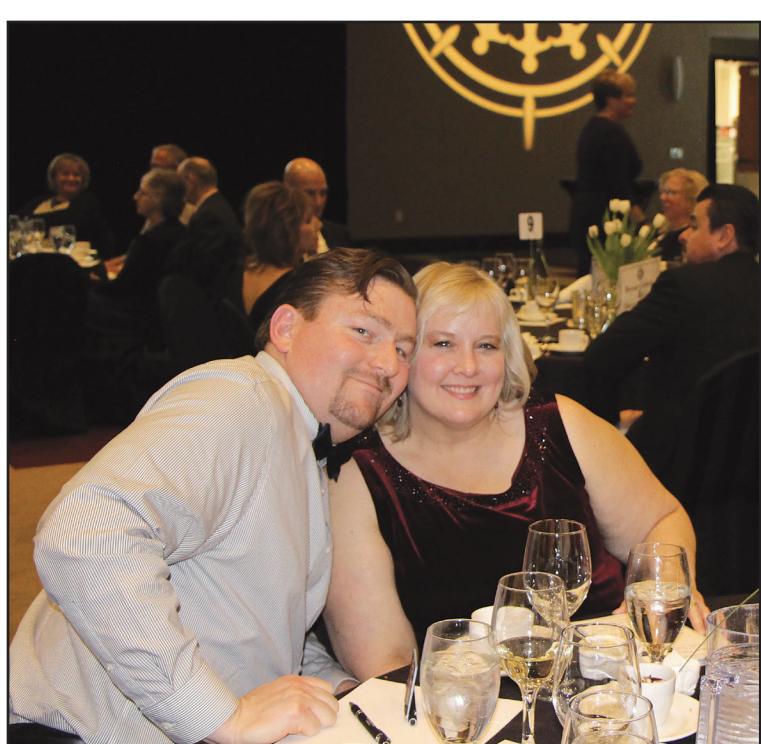
The floral centerpieces were also auctioned at the Catholic Charities Gala. (ICR photo/Vero Gutiérrez)



From left, Kathy and Brian Harris, Lisa and Curtiss Nate, and Stephanie and Richard Meyers. (ICR photo/Vero Gutiérrez)



From left, Bob Naerebout of the Idaho Dairymen's Association, Martha Alejandre of the Board of Immigration Appeals, and Evan Roth of Sawtooth Law Offices. (ICR photo/Vero Gutiérrez)



Deacon Mac Chester and his wife, Debbie. (ICR photo/ Vero Gutiérrez)



This year's Catholic Charities Benefit Gala was held at the Boise Centre on the Grove. (Photo courtesy of Catholic Charities of Idaho)