



A Letter to the Catholic Faithful of the Diocese of Rockville Centre
From Bishop John O. Barres
Divine Mercy Sunday, April 19, 2020



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday, the global spread of COVID-19, has forced us to reflect, think about our lives and the things we take for granted and to rethink how we live our daily lives. As we continue to celebrate Christ's passion, death and resurrection, we recognize that He is journeying with us during this Easter season.

The Diocese of Rockville Centre is responding to the needs of Long Islanders both physically and spiritually, in a multitude of ways. Catholic Charities of Long Island is a prime example.

Catholic Charities meets the needs of Long Islanders throughout the year, but during times of crisis, we are especially grateful for their work. As one of the state's largest providers of emergency services to those most in need, COVID-19 is stretching Catholic Charities of Long Island beyond its capacity. Catholic Charities responded during 9/11 and Superstorm Sandy, and is now doing so again during this public health crisis.

The COVID-19 pandemic is creating uncertainties for many and we need your help to continue to serve our neighbors most at risk during this crisis. With your support, Catholic Charities will be better equipped to:

- Expand its Meals-On-Wheels programs;
- Provide enhanced and expanded support services to those who were cared for in congregate senior centers which are now closed;
- Provide shopping services to those who are most vulnerable to the pandemic;
- In partnership with the 133 parishes throughout Nassau & Suffolk County, focus on keeping the outreach operations strong for existing and new families who are struggling in their respective communities;
- Stabilize care to the 106 residents with special needs or developmental disabilities in their 13 residences by retaining current staff and increasing staff recruitment;
- Keep seniors safe and healthy in their 16 senior housing facilities by proper cleaning and sanitizing practices, enhanced communication about CDC recommended practices and social distancing; in addition to telehealth/telephone access to support their residents;
- Enable Talbot House to continue to care for homeless individuals in recovery, in addition to their Chemical Dependence Clinics providing telephone assessments and individual counseling through technology; and
- Enable their clinics to continue in a telehealth mode of service delivery during the COVID-19 crisis. This will allow Catholic Charities to continue to assist individuals who

need behavioral health services but due to social distancing are unable to go to a medical appointment.

If you or a family member is in need of assistance, please contact Catholic Charities helpline at (516) 733-7045.

Your support is critical to helping us respond to a growing need for our vital services. Please visit www.catholiccharities.cc and click “Donate” to make your contribution. We are grateful for your generosity and commitment.

You are invited to participate in the daily Mass and other spiritual programming on the Catholic Faith Network (CFN), the national television network based here in our own Diocese. A complete programming schedule is available at www.CFNtv.org. Many parishes are also offering video streamed Masses and other devotions online. Check your parish web site for availability.

Our prayer for you this week is that St. Faustina Kowalska, the Apostle of Divine Mercy intercedes for all of us during these challenging times and watches over all Catholic Charities’ workers who are serving in Christ’s name. Please know that you and your family are remembered in my daily prayers and Masses.

Sincerely in Christ,


+ *John O. Barres*
Most Reverend John O. Barres
Bishop of Rockville Centre