

Care With Dignity ... Life With Hope

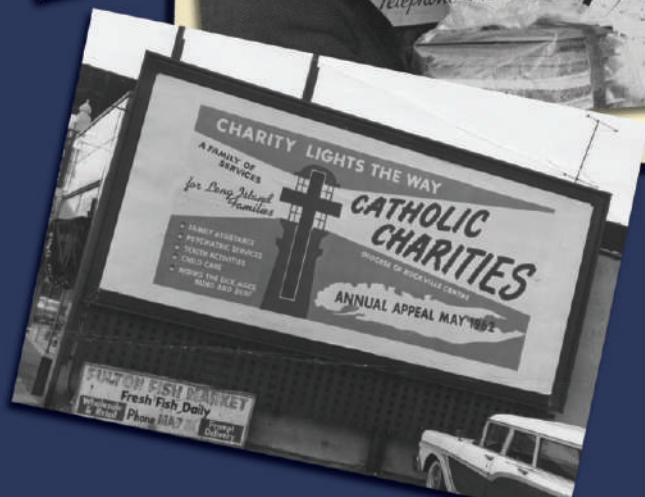
## Guess Who's Turning 65?

The year was 1957 and America's love affair with the suburbs was well under way. World War II had been over for more than a decade and Americans were flocking to newly minted neighborhoods of tree-lined streets and shopping malls. The migration was most striking from New York City to "America's first suburb"—Long Island. It became clear to the Island's first Bishop, Walter Kellenberg, that Nassau and Suffolk counties would now have to face down the big-city problems of poverty, race, affordable housing, employment, mental health and immigration right in our own backyard. Wasting no time, he launched Long Island's Catholic Charities in May of 1957 with 11 people staffing two offices in Mineola and Bay Shore. From those humble beginnings, we served a total of 1,224 people that first year.

But as neighborhoods grew so did we, tackling every changing crisis: waves of immigration, the explosion of teen pregnancies, rampant substance abuse, the AIDS/HIV epidemic, terrorist attacks and even natural disasters. Through it all Catholic Charities was there every step of the way. Today, we're one of the largest human service networks on Long Island with 53 sites from Elmont to the East End. Nearly 500 employees and 300 volunteers serve an average of 53,000 people each year of every faith and background and at every stage of life. And working with local Parish Social Ministry offices at more than 100 parishes, we help tens of thousands more rebuild their lives every day. So while people and problems may change, our promise to bring Christ's love to everyone we meet stays the same.

"Catholic Charities is not only a church roster of 'social service' programs, it is a movement in the church, a breathing of God's Spirit, an expression of God's compassion."

Most Rev. Walter P. Kellenberg, D.D.,  
Founding Bishop of the  
Diocese of Rockville Centre



# Fall and Winter Snapshots

A sincere and heartfelt "thank you" to:



Denise, who runs our Senior Center Book Club. Our members have read and discussed more than 100 books together!



The students and teachers of St. John the Baptist High School for their annual Santa Parade that benefits the adults in our homes for the developmentally disabled.



St. Anne's Church, Garden City for their annual Angel Tree which provided Christmas gifts to more than 50 children in our programs.



Our 15-year veteran, Pamela Davis, for receiving the Community Care RX-DSP Excellence Award and to Dr. Kamil Jaghab who was named 2021 Top Doctor in Psychiatry, Addiction, Psychosomatic, and Pain Management.



The future Physician Assistants from Touro College who kicked off the holidays with gingerbread houses at our Bishop Ryan Residence.



The elves of St. John the Baptist High School who brought Santa early to the kids in our Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program.



Our friends at Fidelis Care for providing Butterball turkey vouchers to our Parish Social Ministry team, making Thanksgiving brighter for needy families throughout Long Island.



The caring healthcare providers with the Molloy College Cabrini Mobile Clinic who visited our Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) office in Freeport and provided free health screenings and a bit of fun for the children!



Our Meals on Wheels staff who delivered hot, nutritious meals to the homebound just in time for Christmas!

**2011 – 2012**

Catholic Charities becomes largest disaster-case management agency in New York in aftermaths of Hurricane Irene and Superstorm Sandy.

**2020** Despite the COVID-19 Pandemic, more than 1.3 million services are provided to 40,069 neighbors.

**2011 – 2012** Project Veterans Independence is launched, bringing housing and rehabilitative services to veterans.

**2011** Cabrini Gardens opens, our 16th housing development for low-income seniors.

**2010** First bi-county Women, Infants & Children (WIC) program opens on Long Island, providing nutrition assistance for pregnant women and their children.

**2009** Mary's Residence, a transitional home for unwed, young moms and their children, opens in Merrick.

**2006** Mary's Manor Enriched Housing opens for frail seniors with low incomes, offering specialized care and social services.

**1999** Thea Bowman Residence for people with physical disabilities opens.

**1994** First Teaching Family Home in New York State opens; two HIV/AIDS homes open.

**1988** Food and Nutrition program (FAN) for pregnant women and children launches.

**1978 – 1979** Franklin Square and Massapequa Park Senior Centers open; legal services added to assist immigrants. Housing Department is established and opens St. Joseph's Village in Selden.

**1976 – 1977** Twenty parishes join our Parish Social Ministry network. Meals-On-Wheels and Talbot House Substance Abuse Crisis Center open; 250 employees serve 21 programs.

**1971** Family Services Division begins providing alcoholism recovery services.

**1968 – 1970** Spanish Social Services formed. Regina Residence, first shelter for single mothers on Long Island, opens.

**1964** Youth mentoring, court services and summer education programs for poor children added.

**1957** Catholic Charities established by Bishop Walter P. Kellenberg; 11 people staff offices in Mineola and Bay Shore, serving 1,224 people.

**1990 – 1991**

HIV/AIDS Services and region's only HIV dental clinic established. Parish Social Ministry counts 74 parishes and 5,300 volunteers.

**1980** Nutrition programs serve 127,000 meals.

**1974 – 1975**

Christopher Residence for the developmentally disabled opens; 333 Vietnamese war refugees resettled.

**1972** Nearly 9,000 people served.

**1958 – 1959**

Offices open in Lynbrook and Riverhead; Mental Health Clinic and programs for deaf and blind are added.

*"The most terrible poverty is loneliness, and the feeling of being unloved."*

— Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta



*The one that got away...*

It's with heavy but most grateful hearts that we wish Godspeed to our beloved Volunteer & Intern Coordinator, Mary Ellen Kwiecinski, on the occasion of her retirement! Mary Ellen has been serving Long Island's most vulnerable in various capacities through Catholic Charities of Long Island for 25 years. In 2007 we realized that her compassion and relentless work ethic inspired everyone around her and she graciously accepted the challenge of building a Volunteer and Internship program. Lucky for us, too. At its height, she led a small army of do-gooders, nearly 400 in number that ranged from school children to seniors and everyone in between. People came from all backgrounds and walks of life, from basketball players to bankers and she matched them perfectly to the tasks at hand. MaryEllen instituted numerous giving opportunities that have become cherished traditions, like an island-wide Christmas Serve-a-thon to a musical variety show that pairs developmentally disabled adults with teen friends. Always, her efforts led to goodness, friendship, and understanding. Her work has resulted in thousands of beautiful outcomes and improved lives. We couldn't have asked for anything more.



## Some Things Never Change

**C**atholic Charities and I were born on Long Island in 1957 so we're both baby boomers. And we've worked together for 34 years so we've seen quite a bit of change, not always for the better.

Take technology. Today we have hundreds of channels instead of just the ten we had as kids. Or we text friends instantly instead of waiting hours on end for the house phone to be free. Expensive long-distance calls are things of the past because FaceTime lets us see and hear our loved ones around the world. And while we poured over encyclopedias or took trips to the library, today anyone can just "google it" and have information on their phones immediately. Technology has even shaped our work lives. It's not unusual for people to be home in their pajamas and still get their jobs done.

This may all sound great but if you're like me, you know that somehow, we had it better. Ironically, while technology gives us many more ways to connect, people feel lonelier than ever before. So while we were battling the COVID pandemic we somehow ignored the growing epidemic of loneliness. We've forgotten the grace and comfort of human interaction.

But not at Catholic Charities. For 65 years poverty, pain and problems come and go. Disasters and heartache take on different shapes and sizes but one thing never changes: we still bring millions of personal, face-to-face services to tens of thousands of our neighbors. We still come into our clinics every day to care for those who need us. We open our housing every day for the developmentally disabled, veterans, and seniors. We still deliver hundreds of meals and ring those doorbells every day to check on our friends. In doing all this we remind those we serve that Jesus loves each and every one of us. And we do it together with you.

**Will you join us by making a 65th anniversary gift today?**

I promise that as long as we have you in our corner, we'll keep the "human" in human service.

Gratefully yours,

Laura A. Cassell  
CEO, Catholic Charities, Diocese of Rockville Centre

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