



The Mission

"Care With Dignity, Life With Hope"

Catholic Charities

Diocese of Rockville Centre, New York

www.catholiccharities.cc

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2001 In Review

As I was preparing this note reflecting on the past year, we were all saddened by the passing of Most Reverend John R. McGann, second Bishop of the Diocese of Rockville Centre. We have all lost a caring shepherd, a visionary, and a valued friend. Bishop McGann's life and ministry were rich blessings to the Diocese of Rockville Centre. His leadership fostered the growth of our diocese in many ways, including the development of many Catholic Charities initiatives. In retirement, he continued to be a warm, pastoral presence in the diocese, one that will be missed.



The work Bishop McGann helped to develop will grow and prosper under Most Reverend William F. Murphy, our new Bishop. Scant days after his installation, Bishop Murphy was suddenly called upon to lead the diocese through the most tragic, critical time that most of us have ever experienced. In immediate answer to the destruction of the World Trade Center on September 11th, Bishop Murphy brought the full resources of the diocese to bear on needs created by the disaster. Under his direction, the Diocesan Office of Family Ministry, the St. Vincent de Paul Society, Catholic Health Services, Catholic Charities, and the parishes of Long Island collaborated to provide counseling, crisis intervention, bereavement support, financial resources, and other assistance to families in need. As chair of the Diocesan Relief Committee, I have been inspired by the commitment and skill of our diocesan and parish partners in the midst of crisis. Together, we have served thousands of people directly or indirectly impacted by the disaster, including cash assistance of more than \$1,000,000 to more than 200 families, and we continue to minister to victims on a daily basis.

Bishop Murphy made such collaboration and communication central features of diocesan operations last November by establishing a cabinet structure for management of the diocese. Seven cabinet secretaries, each representing a number of diocesan offices and ministries, will meet weekly with the Bishop and several of his top-level advisors to address pressing issues. As the cabinet Secre-

tary for Social Services, I am honored to represent Catholic Charities, the Office of Prison Ministry and Criminal Justice Affairs, the Office of Respect Life, and the Housing Office. We at Catholic Charities look forward to the opportunities for collaboration and cooperation that the cabinet will provide. Further integration of our services with other diocesan and parish efforts will advance our mission to provide "Care With Dignity...Life With Hope" to the poor, isolated, vulnerable, and disadvantaged among us.

Two areas where our efforts will increase in 2002 are housing and parish social ministry (PSM). Bishop Murphy has identified affordable housing as a priority for the Church on Long Island. Our Housing Office is the designated diocesan entity for addressing this need. Over the past two decades, largely with the support and leadership of Bishop McGann, we have developed 15 affordable housing complexes on Long Island, totaling more than 1,200 units. These complexes have served seniors, with one residence and some additional units for people with physical disabilities. Through Catholic Charities, the diocese has developed significant new housing for those with special needs. An additional focus of housing will be low-income families.

Parish social ministry continues to develop local responses to needs in partnership with every Long Island parish. This year we joyfully celebrate the 25th anniversary of PSM in our diocese. The anniversary will be celebrated by a mass at Our Lady of Grace, West Babylon, in June, with Bishop Murphy as celebrant.

Last year brought more than its share of trials and tragedy, and greatly increased the need for works of justice and mercy. We are committed to continuing this work in the new year, with renewed faith and hope, with the new passion and promise of Bishop Murphy's leadership, and with grateful remembrance of the blessing of Bishop McGann's legacy.

I extend our gratitude to all of the donors and volunteers who continue to make our work possible. We wish you God's richest blessings in the new year.

Laura A. Cassell
Chief Executive Officer

The tragic and sudden loss of hundreds of friends, co-workers, and loved ones on September 11th impacted thousands of Long Island families. The wound on our communities cut across lines of ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and geography. Immediately following the destruction of the World Trade Center, Catholic Charities, the diocesan Office of Family Ministry, Catholic Health Services, the St. Vincent de Paul Society, and the parishes of Long Island began a coordinated effort, under Bishop Murphy's direction, to respond to the needs arising from the event.

The day of the disaster, Catholic Charities immediately established an information and referral line for people critically in need of counseling, financial support, or another need. Professionals at our four mental health clinics were designated for the provision of special services for critical and post-traumatic stress. Staff at our chemical dependency facilities were also prepared to assist individuals at high risk of turning to drugs and alcohol to cope with the critical times. Catholic Charities' Parish Social Ministry department arranged for training of volunteers and staff in parishes to minister to the families and individuals affected by the disaster.



Parishioners and people of goodwill sent generous contributions from throughout the country. A few contributions even came in from overseas. In total, contributions to the Diocese of Rockville Centre's World Trade Center Disaster Relief Fund topped \$2.6 million. These funds were designated to ease the financial hardship of those who lost family members or employment. Because the disaster affected such a diverse group of people, and because everyone was impacted differently, each application for assistance must be considered separately. The diocese's approach is individual and pastoral, not "one size fits all." A Catholic Charities staff person was assigned to work with parish priests and parish outreach staff to reach out to families, support them pastorally, assess their needs, and provide them with the necessary financial support and services.

To date, more than \$1 million has been distributed from the diocesan fund to more than 200 affected families in more than 60 parishes. In most cases, financial help has been provided within seven business days of receipt of a completed application. Requests for assistance have

included mortgage and rent payments, food and other basic necessities, tuition, job retraining, and many other needs. In close cooperation with local parishes, Catholic Charities connects applicants with necessary diocesan support to help people stabilize their lives and move on.

While the disaster created many immediate and critical needs that have been addressed by counseling, financial assistance, and other supports, many significant needs have yet to unfold. As months pass, we see more and more people impacted by the disaster coming forward for assistance. Some do so because family savings have run out. Others are beginning to come to terms with the event emotionally and realizing that they need assistance. (See article on Project Liberty, opposite) As the economic impact on New York continues to be felt, people whose employment depended on the World Trade Center are losing their jobs and requesting assistance.

The effects of September 11th will be felt for a very long time. While the day's events shocked and horrified us all, the tragedy also strengthened the bonds between Long Islanders. The pain of families was met with the compassion of neighbors, the generosity of donors, and the commitment of those involved in ministering. While destruction of the World Trade Center was sudden, cataclysmic, and indiscriminate, the diocesan relief effort offers a response that is the opposite—compassionate to all who were affected, measured and judicious in allocating assistance, and patiently committed to the long-term healing that must take place.



*Have no fear
for what tomorrow may bring.
The same loving God
who cares for you today
will take care of you tomorrow
and every day.
God will either shield you from suffering
or give you unfailing strength to bear it.
Be at peace, then,
and put aside all anxious thoughts
and imaginations.*

St. Francis de Sales


Everyone on Long Island was impacted in some way on September 11th. Some were devastated by the loss of loved ones, friends, or co-workers. Others lost their jobs. Even those of us who were not immediately affected suffer from the feeling that things might never be the same. We all saw the televised images of that day over and over again, and some still avoid tall buildings or flinch when an airplane flies overhead.

Struggling to find meaning or to understand what happened is something that everyone must do after such a tragic event. Experts who have studied the aftermath of major disasters, both manmade and natural, believe that many individual emotional reactions can take months—even years—to emerge. Take a look at the list below and decide whether any of the items applies to you.

- I've had regular headaches since the disaster, which I usually don't.
- I can still see the images of that day, even when I try to block them out.
- I'm still glued to the TV. I don't want to miss any bit of news about the disaster or its aftermath.
- I've been more irritable with people close to me lately.
- I'm easily startled since the disaster.
- My eating habits have changed.

These are among the many signs of unusual stress. They are normal reactions to an abnormal situation.

Catholic Charities' Project Liberty, with funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, helps disaster survivors understand what is happening and how they are reacting. Project Liberty staff provide free crisis counseling to individuals and referrals to further services when necessary to assist with any disaster-related problems. Project Liberty can also provide education and information to individuals and groups to enable them to recognize symptoms of stress and to develop coping mechanisms.

For further information or to ask about individual counseling, establishing support groups, group discussions or presentations, call Catholic Charities Project Liberty at (631) 654-3899 for services in Suffolk County or (516) 248-6624 for services in Nassau County. 



Holiday Giving

Long Islanders once again have opened their hearts enthusiastically to those in need during the holiday season. Remembering that there were people in need before September 11th, our communities again shared their good fortune with those less fortunate. MSC Industries and the seniors at Grandel Rehabilitation and Nursing Center gave gift cards for toy stores which were distributed to children in our Teaching Family Homes, Regina Residence, and Immigrant Services.



Holy Trinity H.S. students through their annual fundraiser, raised \$1,533, the highest amount ever, for the Christmas Help-A-Family fund.

Readers of *The Mission*, *The Long Island Catholic* and *Newsday* contributed an outstanding \$114,866 to the Christmas-Help-A-Family Fund, enabling us to share the season's joy and reach out to 200 families and individuals this year. The O'Sullivan Children Foundation contributed \$5,000 to the Fund.



In corporate giving, The Roslyn Savings Foundation donated \$6,789 toward a recreational program at Regina Residence. the Dime Savings Bank contributed \$2,000 for foreclosure prevention.


The Gift of Reading effort received \$1,000 from JPMorgan Chase Bank and \$1,000.00 from King Kullen. Notre Dame Parish in New Hyde Park donated 850 new books while Rocky Point High School donated 200 books. 



Photo ID: Top: Laura A. Cassell, CEO, center, accepts check from Holy Trinity High School students Jenna Ushkowitz and John-Peter Bottke; **Center:** Volunteers from JPMorgan Chase donate their time in wrapping books at St. Agnes Village for seniors, for the Gift of Reading effort. **Bottom:** Laura Cassell receives check from John Naporkowski of Dime Savings Bank.

Around and about Catholic Charities

- On October 3, 2001, our newly installed Bishop, Most Rev. William F. Murphy, blessed and dedicated our newest senior housing complex, Bishop Daly Gardens, named for retired Auxiliary Bishop, James Daly. Bishop Daly Gardens, located in Uniondale, on the grounds of St. Martha's parish, contains 45 units. We also opened Msgr. Henry Reel Village II in Medford with an additional 43 units. This brings the number of housing complexes to 15 and the number of units to 1,263.
- Catholic Charities, in partnership with Queen of the Most Holy Rosary R.C. Parish and Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Freeport, has initiated a special pilot program of math and English tutoring for 8th grade students at the Roosevelt Middle School. The project was established due to the low percentage of students passing the math and english assessment test. Volunteers come from the Roosevelt churches as well as high school juniors and seniors, neighboring parishes, Catholic Charities, teachers, and college students. Parents wishing to enroll their child may call Catholic Charities at (516) 733-7050. It is based on a first come first served basis. Tutors undergo a one-time training. The math is basic, so anyone with a rudimentary working knowledge of math may qualify as a tutor. Tutoring is done at QMHR parish school on Saturday mornings. To date fifteen parents have signed up their children. Since the program began in January, it will continue through April when New York State administers its 8th grade assessment test.
- A grant in the amount of \$11,400 to assist Regina Residence's Mentoring Program/Rent Subsidy was received from the Patrino Foundation. This grant will provide young women who are graduating from the mentoring program and leaving Regina Residence with a rent subsidy for their own apartment for one year while they develop sufficient work skills to enable them to pay rent by themselves.
- Catholic Charities has been awarded a grant by Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) to enhance our Commack outpatient treatment services to clients who qualify for Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), primarily mothers with children. At least half of the 35 clients in the Commack Day Treatment Program are TANF eligible. We expect that number to increase as we incorporate the enhanced outpatient services offered under this grant. Many clients enrolled in the Day Rehabilitation program graduate to the Clinic program for continuing care as they successfully meet their treatment goals. Many of the Clinic clients are not TANF eligible, but as we incorporate the enhanced outpatient services under this grant we expect this number to increase, giving the opportunity for clients to access child care services on site while they participate in treatment. Program enhancements include case management services, recreational/activities therapy, and a child resource room. 



Below: Laura A. Cassell, Chief Executive Officer of Catholic Charities holds proclamation from the Town of Hempstead. The late Bishop John R. Mc Gann is to the right, Town of Hempstead councilwoman Dorothy Goosby, Bishop William F. Murphy, center, Bishop James Daly next to him, and Hempstead Town Supervisor, Richard Guardino join Rev. Edward Fitzpatrick, pastor of St. Martha's at the dedication of Bishop Daly Gardens in Uniondale.



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