



The Mission

Care With Dignity ... Life With Hope



www.catholiccharities.cc

August 2013 Volume 17 No. 1

Some Things Remained

"All we could think about was how to survive. With three small children we had to figure out where to sleep, what to eat, where to wash, and how to get clean clothes. We felt like zombies that whole first week."

When Erin Bevilacqua and her family returned to their Amityville home the day after Superstorm Sandy, they discovered their entire first floor under three feet of water and sewage. The gas and electrical lines had been severed, their car was beyond repair, and all their personal belongings had been destroyed. It took weeks before their electricity returned and by that time, mold had set in throughout the house. Everything had to be torn out and carted away. Although they qualified for FEMA rental assistance there was no vacancy anywhere on Long Island. The family spent the winter huddled together in one room, with duct-taped windows and portable heaters running on emergency generators.

To make matters worse, her husband lost his father and his job during the whole ordeal. "Everything that could go wrong, did go wrong," says Erin, "but there was a light in all that darkness."

That light was the Parish Social Ministry (PSM) team at St. Martin's in Amityville, who delivered food, clothes, cleaning supplies and gift cards to the struggling family. They even provided Thanksgiving meals and toys at Christmas. "But it was Catholic Charities' Disaster Relief Fund that saved our home. That financial support paid our mortgage when there was no money coming in. There were no endless application forms, no jumping through hoops. Just real help when we needed it most."

Today, Erin and her family are rebuilding their lives and our Disaster Case Management team is with them every step of the way. Erin concludes, "It seemed like we lost everything to Superstorm Sandy, but actually some things remained. We had family, friends, and a place in the heart of people like you at Catholic Charities."

On October 29, 2012, the home of Erin and her family was almost completely destroyed by Superstorm Sandy. With the help of Catholic Charities Disaster Case Management they are rebuilding their lives.



Superstorm Sandy

Your Response

Since Superstorm Sandy reached our shores, Catholic Charities' response has relied on inspired and energetic collaboration between staff, volunteers, Catholic schools, pastors, and parish social ministry programs across the Diocese of Rockville Centre. YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT has already accomplished much toward rebuilding our region.

- Long Island's creative, resourceful parishes were the first line of the Church's response to Superstorm Sandy. They served meals, opened their doors as warming centers and charging stations, accepted and distributed donations, and so much more. They are the heart of the Church's response and the core of our communities.
- To date, the generosity and compassion of donors like you has also allowed our **Disaster Response Fund** to distribute more than \$2.1 million to 1,800 households in the hardest hit communities. These funds feed families, repair roofs, replace boilers, eliminate mold, and help in many other ways.
- Immediately after the storm, donated supplies poured in to Long Island from across the country. Catholic Charities received tractor-trailers full of non-perishable foods, bleach, power tools, blankets, and other useful items. They were given to families in need through parishes in Amityville, East Rockaway, Freeport, Island Park, Lindenhurst, Long Beach, and other impacted communities.
- Looking toward long-term recovery, a team of Catholic Charities disaster case managers continues reaching out to storm survivors, assessing their needs, developing individualized recovery plans, and walking with these Long Islanders on their journeys toward renewed stability. Spiritual counseling is also available to storm survivors. If you or someone you know needs help, **please call (631) 608-8882**. Superstorm Sandy reminded us all that God is often closest to us when He seems furthest away, when we suffer. The outpouring of love that met Sandy's downpouring of rain is testament to that. The road to recovery is long, so we ask for your continued prayers for those rebuilding in the storm's wake.

A south shore family assisted by our Disaster Response Fund sends their personal thanks to you on sheetrock being used to rebuild their home. Generous supporters like you funded the program with donations of more than \$2.1 million and every penny was directly distributed to hard-hit families.



We welcome your support to our ongoing disaster response.
Call (516) 733-7028 or visit www.catholiccharities.cc/sandy to make a secure online donation.



From Our Mailbag



The Thanks Belong to You!

Dear Catholic Charities,
Thank you so much for the extraordinary care you gave my brother this year at your residence for the developmentally disabled and the incredible dedication you displayed, especially in the difficult week after Hurricane Sandy and over Christmas, when he was at Franklin Hospital. I understand that the manager called all the staff as the hurricane approached, asked for all hands on deck, and you responded by fully staffing the house with 12 or more people all week. You did so, leaving your own families for hours at a time, when many of you had no power, no heat and no way to cook in your own homes, for your own families. You treated him, and all the residents, like they were your own family, and for this I and my family are all eternally grateful.

FL – Westbury, NY

Dear Catholic Charities,
We are extremely grateful for the most generous financial assistance we have received to help us repair and recover during this difficult time as a result of Hurricane Sandy. Through your generosity we have truly felt the caring and kindness of others and have grown further strong in our faith and belief. With the help of people like you and the love of God we will get through this disastrous event and come out stronger and better.

EC – Island Park, NY

Because You Were There

Dear Friend,

When Superstorm Sandy hit Long Island almost nine months ago, hundreds of people just like you were at Catholic Charities' doorstep, rolling up their sleeves and asking, "How can we help?" Almost overnight, our parking lot was transformed into a volunteer distribution center for truckloads of emergency supplies pouring in from around the country. And we were at the heart of tremendous financial support, distributing all of the \$2.1 million dollars we collected for hundreds of hard-hit families throughout Long Island.

People instinctively turned to Catholic Charities when the storm hit— not only those who needed help—but those who wanted to give it too.

People seem to know that when the chips are down, supporters like you will be there. You're the cavalry that rides in despite the odds and you're not holding up the paperwork, or reviewing fund procedures, or stalling. You're responding. You did it after Sandy and for more than 60,000 others who turned to us this past year

We were there for every one of them because you were there.

But we still have work to do. Our disaster case managers are serving well over a thousand families and believe it or not, almost nine months later, there are still a few who have no electricity in their homes! That's why we need your help.

Will you please consider a gift in the attached envelope?

Your kindness will continue to set things right for Sandy victims and for the thousands of others who come to Catholic Charities each year for help. On their behalf you have our sincerest thanks.

Sincerely,

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



Responding...

Our special thanks to these friends for helping us provide
Care With Dignity...Life With Hope.



Our Disaster Case Management office was opened in August 2012 to respond to the ongoing needs from Hurricane Irene with a \$1 million grant administered by the **New York State Office of Emergency Management** and funded by the federal government's **Department of Homeland Security**. In light of the growing numbers in the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, the grant was expanded to more than \$5 million and allowed us to increase the number of staff and services for victims of the storm.

Our relief effort was bolstered by an incredible display of generosity from across the nation. On behalf of all those affected by the storm, sincerest gratitude belongs to:

- Catholic Charities USA—\$1,161,585
- The Upstate Dioceses of New York State—\$560,000
- Hurricane Sandy Long Island Disaster Relief, a fund of the McCormick Foundation—\$100,000
- Mercury One—\$100,000
- Wright Risk Management—\$50,000

We also offer special thanks to:

- The Word Among Us
- Mother Teresa Homes and The Caring Hands Foundation
- The Discalced Carmelite Friars
- The SC Ministry Foundation
- The Friends of Mercy Medical Center
- Coastline International Distributors



More than \$160,000 was raised in May at Catholic Charities' annual Caritas Dinner. **Sr. Francene Horan, R.S.M.** was presented with the Caritas Medal before 180 friends who gathered to thank her for a lifetime of service to the needy.

Our special thanks to **Fidelis Care New York** for their grant of \$141,000 which provides nursing care to aging residents at Catholic Charities' 13 homes for the developmentally disabled. Their outstanding commitment to this population is greatly appreciated.

We are thankful for to **The Theresa and Edward O'Toole Foundation** for their most recent gift of \$25,000. Their ongoing support makes them a valuable partner in caring for Long Island's most needy.

Our New Web Site Lets You See the Good That You Do

Now easier than ever, you can see the good that you do by visiting **Catholic Charities' newly redesigned web site**. You can watch videos of real clients sending you their personal thanks, read their stories and see their photos on our blog, access program information and most important, learn how to continue helping your Long Island neighbors.

Come visit us at **www.catholiccharities.cc** and see the good that you do!



Photo by Greg Shemitz, 3Vphoto.com

The Mission
Development and
Communications Department,
Catholic Charities,
Diocese of Rockville Centre
(516) 733-7028
www.catholiccharities.cc

Laura A. Cassell
Chief Executive Officer

Editor:
Scott Stepp

Writer This Issue:
Umberto Mignardi

Design & Layout:
Jeff Thureau

