

# CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

supports moms and babies

During the 2026 Catholic Schools Week, Catholic Charities of Long Island (CCLI) visited several Catholic elementary schools, speaking to more than 1,500 students about its mission to care for neighbors in need. Danielle Campbell, Director of Communications and Development, met with students to explain how CCLI carries out the mission of Jesus by serving those less fortunate. Inspired to take action, students at Saint Agnes Cathedral School in Rockville Centre collected more than \$8,000 in change for Catholic Charities' Regina Maternity Services. Students at Saint Patrick's in Smithtown and Saint Patrick's in Bay Shore donated carloads of baby supplies and students from Chaminade High School collected over 16,570 diapers. The week highlighted how faith, education, and service come together to make a meaningful difference.





**Mother Cabrini**  
HEALTH FOUNDATION

## CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF LONG ISLAND RECEIVES \$1.5 MILLION GRANT FROM THE MOTHER CABRINI HEALTH FOUNDATION

A \$1.5 million grant from the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation directly enhances two important Catholic Charities of Long Island outreaches, Parish Social Ministry (PSM) and Comprehensive Assessment Response Engagement and Spirituality (CARES), along with their vital Emergency Relief Fund (ERF) component.

CCLI's Faith Community Social Support Ministry grant was one of 399 announced January 28 by the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation, the largest grantmaking organization focused exclusively on advancing the health and well-being of New Yorkers. "The support of Mother Cabrini Health Foundation is crucial as we amplify these programs serving needy Long Islanders," said Michael E. Smith, Chief Executive Officer of Catholic Charities of Long Island. "This grant, from such a leading New York organization devoted to important Catholic causes, is a source of pride and an impetus for CCLI to provide even better service in 2026."

PSM supports local outreach work at Catholic parishes across Long Island, where each year 145,000 people of all faiths and backgrounds seek help to address their basic needs. PSM equips parishes with skills and resources to respond effectively. CARES provides crisis care management to individuals and families in critical need, with more personalized and clinically intensive support than a local parish ministry could normally offer. ERF gives financial assistance to neighbors struggling with rents, utilities and unexpected bills no one else can cover.

The Mother Cabrini Health Foundation grant enhances PSM and CARES community-based programs by increasing staff (including bilingual staff), training, and support for parishes; and bolstering collaboration with other local service organizations. Building up ERF financial assistance furthers its reach and better supports those in need throughout Nassau and Suffolk counties.

Over \$142 million in grants were awarded to organizations across New York State that are strengthening essential systems of care while addressing the rising and immediate needs of vulnerable New Yorkers. "Our grantee partners are navigating an incredibly challenging landscape, and yet their commitment to serving their communities continues to deepen. These grants demonstrate our resolve to stand with them by addressing urgent needs today, while strengthening the systems and workforce that will support New Yorkers' health for years to come," said Msgr. Gregory Mustaciolo, Chief Executive Officer of the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation.

[WWW.CABRINIHEALTH.ORG](http://WWW.CABRINIHEALTH.ORG)



BISHOP JOHN O. BARRES GREET'S MICHAEL SMITH, CEO OF CCLI, AT 2025 CARITAS AWARD DINNER.

Dear Friend of Catholic Charities,

With warmer months ahead, our outlook improves as the blooms begin to burst and our yards fill with beautiful colors. Easter's promise has renewed us.

New growth is always welcome, and nowhere more than at Catholic Charities of Long Island. This positive development was made possible by a generous grant from the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation. Two of our programs, Parish Social Ministry (PSM) and Comprehensive Assessment Response Engagement and Spirituality (CARES), will enjoy a fantastic year.

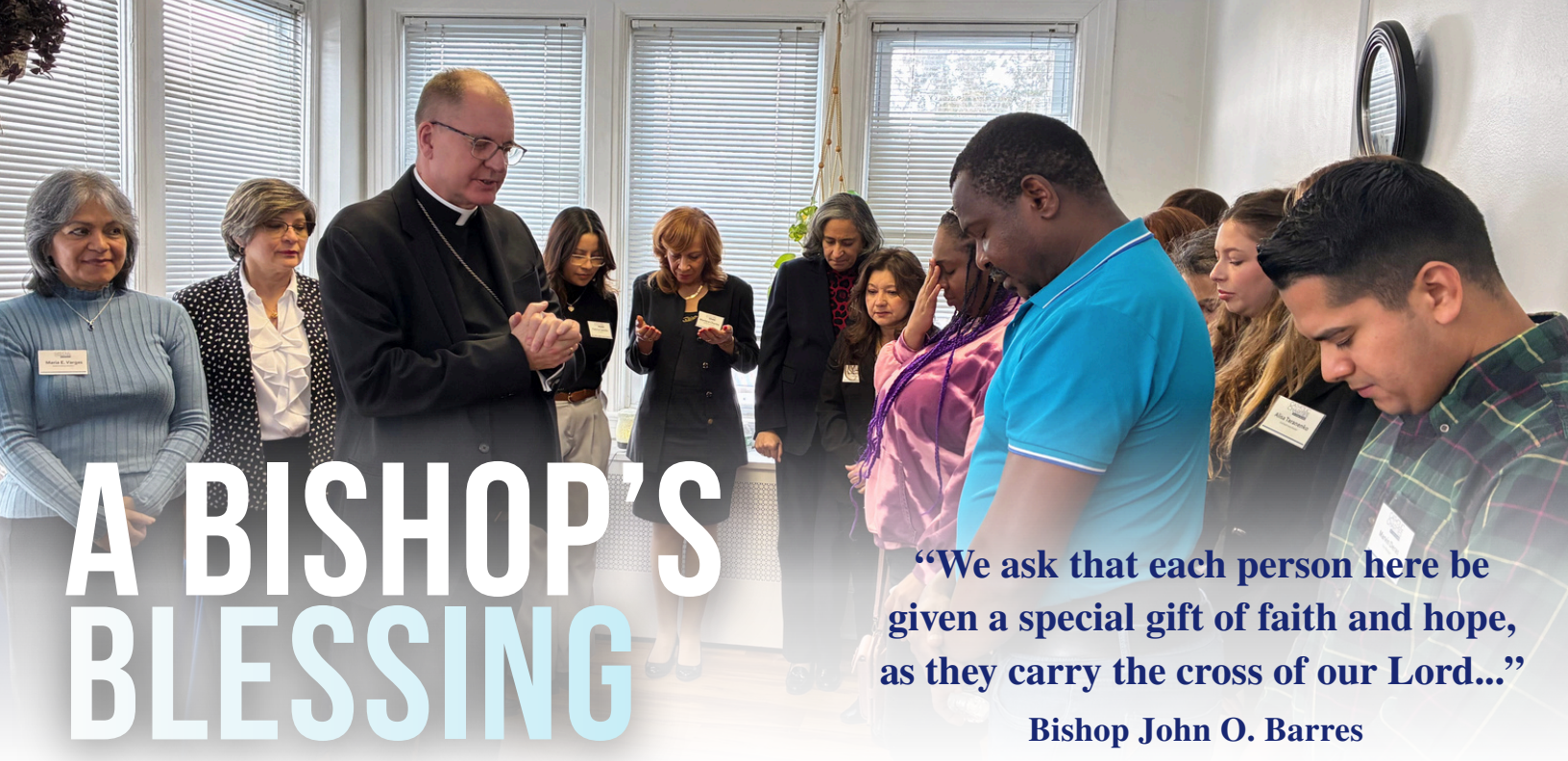
I'm especially happy that our Emergency Relief Fund (ERF) also received a boost. We can now help more of those who come to Catholic Charities and Long Island parishes seeking assistance with their rent or mortgage payment, a medical bill or an unexpected car repair. We are so glad the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation recognized our support for those in need.

Ramping up our staffing is a big part of the equation. Few things make me happier as a CEO. Doing so will enable Catholic Charities to assist more people than we already do. If you look around, it's hard to miss many struggling to make ends meet. Affordability is a big issue affecting housing, food prices, health care costs and many other needs of Long Islanders.

If you can help us share hope with more Long Islanders, we'd be very grateful to receive your gift of any amount. May God bless you and yours as we celebrate the blessings of the Risen Lord.

In Christ,

Michael E. Smith, Chief Executive Officer



# A BISHOP'S BLESSING

**“We ask that each person here be given a special gift of faith and hope, as they carry the cross of our Lord...”**

**Bishop John O. Barres**

Bishop John O. Barres of Rockville Centre listened with a shepherd’s heart to staff and clients sharing how Catholic Charities of Long Island serves immigrants and refugees seeking assistance.

Immigrants and refugees from nations including Ukraine, Haiti, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Afghanistan shared the struggles they encountered in their native lands that led many to migrate to the United States and the support Catholic Charities has offered since their arrival on Long Island.

As Bishop Barres greeted each person served by CCLI, he promised to remember them and their families in his prayer. He asked each family specific questions about where they were from and listened as they expressed their hopes and concerns.

Michael E. Smith, CEO of Catholic Charities, in welcoming remarks, told Bishop Barres that his “prayerful support of our mission-driven work makes an immeasurable difference in what we are able to do and accomplish for our Long Island neighbors in need.” The meeting took place February 26 at the Immigrant Services building in Amityville.

Staff members explained their work to the bishop. Carmen Maquilon, director of Immigrant Services, provided additional details about programs they supervise or staff. Many first came to CCLI as immigrants and refugees themselves. A supervisor spoke about Catholic Charities staff, who serve as “caregivers who carry on the mission.” The work can be draining, and what keeps them going is “our faith, our beliefs.”

After hearing from each staff member and person being assisted by Catholic Charities who was present, Bishop Barres led the group in prayer and gave his blessing. “We ask that each person here be given a special gift of faith and hope, as they carry the cross of our Lord, as they try to move through all the difficulties and crosses of their situations,” the bishop prayed. CCLI employees are “a great inspiration to all of us.”



## Lenten Reflections on Dilexi Te

During Lent, CCLI’s social media featured brief excerpts from Pope Leo XIV’s first Apostolic Exhortation, Dilexi Te (“I Have Loved You”), focused on the Church’s call to love and serve the poor.





## FAMILY HONORED AT CARITAS DINNER

Registration is open for the 2026 Caritas Award Dinner on Wednesday, May 13, at the Heritage Club at Bethpage. CCLI's biggest fundraiser honors Joseph Fennessy, a high-ranking executive during his distinguished 41-year career with Deloitte and Touche LLP, and his daughter, Carol Sciotto, the executive director of CYO Long Island, serving 19,000 youth. Fennessy is a board member at Molloy University and the Mount Sinai Health System. He is chair of the Finance Committee and a lector at St. James Parish in Seaford. Sciotto leads CYO's partnership with CCLI, coordinating donations for Meals-on-Wheels recipients, homes for the developmentally disabled and senior centers. To attend, please visit [catholiccharities.cc/register](http://catholiccharities.cc/register)



## BETHANY HOGAN ATTENDS LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Bethany Hogan, clinic supervisor of Addiction Treatment Services, Hampton Bays Clinic, was selected for the OASAS Leadership Academy, a training program covering essential leadership skills, including communication, trauma-informed practices, and work-life balance. Bethany, a 10-year CCLI staff member, became clinic supervisor last September, after serving as senior counselor and starting as an intern. The trainings, from March to June, are offered by the Office of Addiction Services and Supports. "It is nice to be with other professionals in the field. It will impact our clinic in a positive way, not only for the clinicians I supervise but for our clients as well." Way to go, Bethany!

## SENIOR CENTER'S NEW HOME

Bingo games are the big draw at the West Hempstead Senior Community Center sponsored by Catholic Charities of Long Island, but a Thursday morning music medley had seniors dancing and others swaying in their seats to the Big Band sounds of a large ensemble with horns, drums, guitars and piano. "The music is so nice. It's in keeping with our period," said Doris Chapman, who's been coming since late 2024.

That's when the senior center moved from Franklin Square into its new home at St. Thomas the Apostle Parish. The single-level space is more conducive to the center's 140 seniors. A ramp leads to the entrance door, and air conditioning keeps things cool inside when it's hot outside.

Her friend Gus Giulekas is another smooth dancer. DJ parties for Christmas, Valentine's Day and a 50s dance are his personal favorites. "I like to dance," said Gus, who used to be a driver for the Oceanside Center for many years and now comes to West Hempstead five days a week.

The West Hempstead center, where Gena Damato has served as program manager for a decade, is one of three Catholic Charities operates. The other two are in Oceanside at St. Anthony's parish and in Wantagh.

*"Stand up in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly and revere your God. I am the Lord" (Leviticus 19:32).*



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