



# ARCHDIOCESE COVID-19 RELIEF FUND IMPACT REPORT

September 15, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The global pandemic has wreaked havoc on our health and health care systems, our economy, parishes, schools and the daily routines. News of unspeakable loss and devastating financial hardship suffered by our neighbors and people around the world can give rise to a pervasive feeling of dread in even the most optimistic people of God.

As disciples of Christ we are called to meet discouragement with hope, want with generosity and fear with love. We look to the timeless truth Jesus presents in the Gospel of Matthew 25, the parable of the Last Judgment. There Jesus aligned himself to the poor and marginalized with the powerful words: “whatever you do for one of these least of my brothers and sisters, you do for me.”

The Corporal Works of Mercy of our Catholic tradition are rooted in this parable. As followers of Christ we are sent to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, visit the sick, visit the imprisoned, bury the dead and give alms to the poor. As the pandemic has spread throughout our archdiocese, our state, nation and the world, the needs of the most under-resourced magnify and call us to fulfill Christ’s command to show mercy.

The Archdiocese of Chicago, in partnership with Catholic Charities, launched the COVID-19 Relief Fund soon after the pandemic began to answer the call of Jesus to extend God’s compassion and love to those in need. Please take a few moments to review the attached description of the fund and the intended recipients of your mercy and generosity. We know that everyone’s situation is different, but if you are able to share your resources at this time, I would be grateful.

With every blessing for good health and God’s peace.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Card. Blase J. Cupich".

Archbishop of Chicago

## A COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSE TO A HISTORIC CRISIS

Archdiocese of Chicago and Catholic Charities workers and volunteers are on the frontlines supporting those affected by the devastation of COVID-19. In addition, the Archdiocese of Chicago, in partnership with Catholic Charities, has launched an ambitious effort to support individuals and communities impacted by COVID-19 to meet basic, financial and spiritual needs. We are providing shelter and food, helping Catholic school families, working to prevent domestic violence and supporting vital crisis ministries such as outreach to early-release inmates in our jail system. Below are some examples of the impact your donations have already made.

### Oversight of the Fund

In order to ensure that donated funds are put to best use, a committee composed of donors, clergy and business and civic leaders oversees the distribution of all donated funds. This committee makes recommendations to Cardinal Blase J. Cupich based on available funds, need and impact. The cardinal then approves the distribution of funds to beneficiaries.

### The Archdiocese of Chicago

The Archdiocese of Chicago, pastored by Cardinal Cupich, serves more than 2.2 million Catholics in 291 parishes in Cook and Lake counties. The archdiocese employs more than 15,000 people in its ministries including Catholic Charities, the region's largest nonprofit social service agency, and 162 elementary and secondary schools.

### Catholic Charities

Helping people in need since 1917, Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago is one of the largest private, nonprofit social service agencies in the Midwest. They assist anyone in need without regard to religious, ethnic or economic background and clients can access a comprehensive network of services that range from food pantries to mental health counseling, affordable housing and senior services.



# FUNDING SUMMARY

Dec. 21, 2020

<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>Needs presented in case statement</b>	<b>Needs presented to committee</b>	<b>Distributions to date</b>	<b>Outstanding needs (presented)</b>
<b>Catholic Charities – Food Assistance</b>	\$3,000,000	\$655,000	\$1,655,000	\$0
<b>Catholic Charities – Burial Assistance</b>	\$1,800,000	\$1,110,000	\$1,110,000	\$0
<b>Catholic Charities – Shelter Assistance</b>	\$5,500,000	\$5,550,000	\$3,608,261	\$1,941,739
<b>Catholic School Scholarships – 2020/21 School Year</b>	\$2,000,000	\$1,400,000	\$1,400,000	\$0
<b>Domestic Violence Prevention</b>	N/A	\$607,500	\$834,180	\$0
<b>Parish Ministries – Social Services</b>	N/A	\$523,874	\$371,574	\$152,300
<b>Kolbe House – Equipment Plus 6 Months Operating</b>	\$200,000	\$288,400	\$196,000	\$92,400
<b>Digital Engagement – Parish</b>	N/A	\$47,750	\$50,000	\$0
<b>Vital Crisis Ministries</b>	\$345,000	\$250,000	\$125,000	\$125,000
<b>School Gratitude Fund</b>	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$13,095,000</b>	<b>\$10,682,524</b>	<b>\$9,600,015</b>	<b>\$2,311,439</b>





## BASIC NEEDS – FOOD, BURIAL, SHELTER

The demand for **food assistance** across the region has reached historic levels. As unemployment has risen, individuals and families have been challenged to feed themselves on a consistent basis. This has had a significant impact on young children who often relied on school-based meal programs.

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**Denise feared going outside during the pandemic and was unsure how her family of six would remain fed. Her neighbor explained the new processes put in place for safety at the food pantry. Once Denise saw that all clients remained in their vehicles at all times, that all volunteers, staff and clients were required to wear masks while on-site, that everyone was keeping proper distance and that we had become a contactless drive-through pantry, her mind was put at ease. She went on to thank everyone for helping to make this stressful situation just a bit easier to manage.**

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Funds are needed to provide **assistance to people to bury their loved ones with dignity**, as well as provide comfort to those who are grieving their loss. The expense of burial, particularly on underserved populations who are hardest hit by the virus, has put additional burdens on those who are already suffering. Supporting families through an unexpected loss is also critical.

Short-term **assistance can help keep families in their homes and off the streets**. The high level of unemployment, especially in underserved populations, has had a great impact on families who were already challenged to pay monthly rent. Keeping people in their homes respects the dignity of human life and supports the basic need for shelter for families and individuals.

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**Richard reached Catholic Charities through the intake line and was seeking assistance with his past due rent. He was let go from his job when the stay at home order was put into place due to the pandemic. He was very responsive throughout the entire application process and was thrilled when he was told he'd been approved for the three months' rent. He called a few days later to thank his worker again for the assistance and referred the worker to his friend whose income was also affected by COVID-19.**

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## EMERGENCY TUITION ASSISTANCE

By early September, \$1,018,000 in COVID-19 relief scholarships had been awarded to 726 students, averaging \$1,400 per student. The majority of the awards are to students attending school in Chicago, but the need is great outside the city as well. Awards span schools located throughout the archdiocese from Oak Lawn, to Waukegan, to Elk Grove Village. COVID-19 relief assistance was provided to aid more than 500 families so their children could remain in attendance at 85 schools.



“THIS HAS BEEN A REALLY BIG HELP. I DID NOT WANT TO TAKE MY DAUGHTER OUT OF THE SCHOOL BECAUSE SHE LOVES HER SCHOOL. THIS HELPED US SO MUCH, **THANK YOU.** THIS SCHOOL IS REALLY LIKE FAMILY.”

—Sacred Heart School family

“THANK YOU SO MUCH, I AM IN TEARS! I CAN'T SAY ENOUGH HOW MUCH I APPRECIATE THIS EXTRA RELIEF. **THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU.**”

—Pope Francis Global Academy South family

“OUR FAMILY IS SO GRATEFUL FOR THIS SCHOLARSHIP. **THANK YOU** FOR COMING ALONGSIDE US DURING THESE DIFFICULT TIMES.”

—St. Anastasia School family



## PARISH-BASED MINISTRIES

Parishes across the archdiocese have experienced increased demand for their food pantries, soup kitchens and community outreach. Due to COVID-19, most have had to quickly transition from dine-in service to “to-go” as guests can no longer enter their buildings. In addition, parishes have increased their community outreach since parishes were not able to hold in-person meetings or Mass until recently.

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**At SS. Ita and Thomas of Canterbury, the COVID-19 Relief Fund has provided the financial backing to allow the Outreach Ministries to remain a strong Catholic presence in a neighborhood that has a great need. Compared to the first two months of 2020, spring (March through May) brought a 79.5 percent increase in the number of individuals served weekly by the Food Pantry and a 12.5 percent increase in the number of individuals served weekly by the Soup Kitchen.**

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### St. Gall Parish Ministry

Many in the St. Gall community have turned to the parish for assistance during the pandemic. Their needs have included rent assistance and food delivery. Here are a few quotes from recipients:

**“I AM VERY GRATEFUL. ALL THAT WAS DONE FOR US WAS REALLY GOOD.”**

**“Estoy muy agradecida. Muy bien todo lo que se ha hecho por nosotros.”**

—Maria M.

**“WE WERE WELL TAKEN CARE OF! THE PERSON THAT BROUGHT US THE FOOD WAS VERY POLITE. WE ARE GRATEFUL TO GOD!”**

**“Nos atendieron muy bien! Muy amable la persona que nos trajo la comida. Muy agradecido con dios.”**

—Jose O.



“When we were no longer able to visit jail inmates due to the pandemic, we were committed to continuing our outreach to this vulnerable population. Working with Cornerstone Ministries, we have been able to provide food, supplies and spiritual support to many early-release inmates. As one of the inmates recently said, ‘I honestly don’t know where I would be without Cornerstone.’ This outreach would not have been possible without the generous donations from the people of God in the Archdiocese of Chicago.”

—John McNichols, Kolbe House Ministry

## KOLBE HOUSE JAIL MINISTRY

The early release of prisoners due to the pandemic brought about an urgent need for assistance. Kolbe House was able to step in and provide additional support to Cornerstone Ministry, for inmates transitioning out of a jail setting.

## VITAL CRISIS MINISTRIES

Due to COVID-19, vital ministries needed funding to sustain momentum and deliver excellent ministry in a rapidly changing environment. The three key ministry areas were:

- Evangelization and outreach
- Catechetical support
- Parish leader training

Moving to a virtual environment was a necessary and rewarding transition, particularly for training parish leaders and engaging Alpha participants. Funding impacted more than 2,000 catechists through “virtual catechesis,” offered in three languages. Multiple Alpha sessions, including close to 700 registrants, were launched online in English, Spanish and Polish. Additional funding requests were submitted for digital equipment, which can also be used by parishes to livestream Mass.

“THE FACT THAT THE COURSE WAS ONLINE MADE IT SO MUCH EASIER FOR ME TO ATTEND. HONESTLY, IF THAT HAD NOT BEEN THE CASE I’M UNLIKELY TO HAVE BEEN A PART OF IT.”

—Alpha participant

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Domestic violence goes up whenever families spend more time together, such as during Christmas and summer vacations – the quarantine required during the pandemic has had a similar effect. Similarly, the need to fund domestic violence prevention measures has increased. Since March, we have allocated more than \$830,000 to these efforts.









Many generous donors have already provided assistance through this fund, but unfortunately, there is more work to be done and the needs continue to grow. Please consider making a donation at **[archchicago.org/coronavirus/donate](https://www.archchicago.org/coronavirus/donate)** or by calling **312.534.7959**.