



**CATHOLIC
CHARITIES**
Brooklyn &
Queens
ESTABLISHED 1899

HOPEWORKS

Winter 2021

Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens Provides Essential Assistance to New Yorkers In Need During Global Pandemic [Read on page 3](#)

Catholic Charities Helps Over 2,650 Families During the Holiday Season



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Al Catanese generously donated over 700 turkeys for families in need on Thanksgiving.

Catholic Charities POP Dev. Begins Construction on Housing Despite Pandemic



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Rendering of the future Bishop Valero Senior Residence, now under construction in Astoria, Queens.

Catholic Charities Helps Senior Residents Get their COVID-19 Vaccines



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Seniors from the Catherine Sheridan Senior Housing proudly display proof of their first dose of the COVID-19 Vaccine.

Message from the President & CEO

In the prologue of "Let us Dream," a book recently published by Pope Francis, he writes: "Think of the Samaritan: he stops, pulls up, acts, enters into the world of the wounded man, throws himself into the situation, into the other's suffering, and so creates a new future."

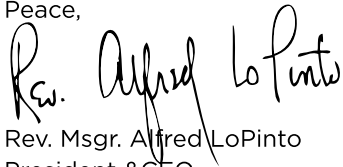
As Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens shares with you this issue of HOPE WORKS, I reflect on how Pope Francis' words live in our communities through your assistance and that of agency staff, volunteers, and donors.

This issue of HOPEWORKS captures the many efforts in which Catholic Charities is engaged in work to create a new future. At the heart of this new future is solidarity, captured in our actions, standing with our struggling sisters and brothers through these difficult days of COVID-19.

Standing together, Catholic Charities has given concrete expression to the compassion of Jesus often expressed in the words of Scripture: "He looked upon them with compassion," which moved Jesus to action, feeding the hungry, curing the sick, raising the dead. Jesus sees and acts, the action that brings hope in the person's life, family, and community.

In the name of the many touched by the combined work of staff, volunteers and donors, I want to thank you for allowing Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens to give expression to the heart of Jesus. I want to encourage all to keep working together and that the words of Pope Francis's book, "Let Us Dream: The Path to a Better Future," might be realized by all.

Peace,



Rev. Msgr. Alfred LoPinto
President & CEO



Our First Virtual Events, Giving Day and Christmas Concert, Were Huge Successes Thanks to Your Generous Support!

Like other nonprofits, the pandemic has forced us to confront the reality that we must re-imagine how we celebrate the agency's work and invest resources into digital technology. In doing so, Catholic Charities held two live-virtual events to help raise money for our services, which are needed now more than ever.

Catholic Charities Giving Day, an all-day online fundraiser on September 24, and A Virtual Christmas Concert, performed by local musicians at The St. Charles Borromeo Church in Downtown Brooklyn on December 10, proved successful for the agency, with hundreds logging on and over \$590K raised to support the work of Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens.

During the live presentation in September, Msgr. Alfred LoPinto, Chief Executive Officer of Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens, highlighted Pope Francis' speech about healing the World during the pandemic. At the center of the Pope's theme is the need to build a world devoted to solidarity while recognizing our interdependence and interconnectedness. Solidarity should be the guiding principle of each individual's actions.

"With your assistance, and certainly in times of crisis," said Msgr. LoPinto, "your presence and support are essential as part of the ongoing effort in the words of St. Paul VI to build 'communities of love,' which have at their heart in the words of St. John Paul II the principle of solidarity."

All proceeds from the online celebrations will help us continue providing help and hope to thousands of families during these difficult times. ■



The 2020 Bishop Joseph M. Sullivan Memorial Golf Classic at North Hills Country Club took place on a beautiful autumn afternoon, with more than 130 golfers – all wearing masks and practicing social distancing – hitting the links to raise money for the agency. The event was sponsored by Peter J. Striano and North Hills Country Club, featuring a breakfast buffet, lunch on the course, and dinner reception featuring a program, silent auction and raffle. The annual Golf Classic is in memory of the late Bishop Joseph M. Sullivan. ■



Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens provides Essential Assistance to New Yorkers in Need During Global Pandemic

At the height of the first wave of the pandemic, Brooklyn and Queens was the epicenter of COVID-19. News outlets reported that the boroughs we serve accounted for nearly 60 percent of all COVID-19 cases in the New York metropolitan area. With the virus spreading and the shutdown of schools and non-essential businesses, Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens felt the impact of thousands of our neighbors dealing with so much. From the fear of the virus and the loss of their loved ones to an uncertain future caused by unemployment and poverty, Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens has served on the front lines of emergency response for years (including 9/11 and Superstorm Sandy), so the agency was able to turn its attention to emergency crisis care quickly.

In partnership with local parishes, Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens began hosting emergency pop-up food pantries at different parish sites every week, providing much-needed food to those struggling with the virus. Up to

10,000 individuals, many standing in long lines for hours with young children, lined up to receive a box of food.

Most of these individuals had faced a multitude of crises during the pandemic and received access to supportive services through the Catholic Charities Call Center and Behavioral Health Services via Telehealth. Many had lost their jobs and wages, fell ill, cared for the ill, and did not qualify for federal stimulus packages. Within a few short weeks, employees at the food pantries

reported a 1,000-percent increase in food requests. In five weeks, Catholic Charities distributed more than a million meals to more than 100,000 individuals with families. Seeing a great need, Catholic Charities expanded its efforts of providing much-needed food packages and services at the 20 Catholic Charities parish-based food pantries and an additional 29 affiliate pantries located throughout both boroughs. In total, the agency distributed over \$3.5 million in food assistance through a network of over 49 parish-based food pantries.

As weeks turned into months, there was an increase of families at risk of losing their housing. The Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens network of Homebase Programs assessed these needs and was able to provide financial assistance through FASTEN, a grant that helps pay rent and rental arrears for those directly impacted by the COVID-19 health crisis due to illness and/or loss of work or wages. Through FASTEN, the Catholic Charities Homebase Programs have helped hundreds of vulnerable neighbors at risk of entering the shelter system.

(continued on page 4)



Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens Provides Essential Assistance to New Yorkers in Need During Global Pandemic *(continued from page 3)*



Through the end of March 2021, for those without stable housing, Catholic Charities is offering homeless New Yorkers some relief during the cold winter nights of the pandemic through Project Brown Bag. Through this initiative, Catholic Charities community outreach workers visit local soup kitchens in the Diocese of Brooklyn to provide brown bags filled with single serve non-perishable food, clothing, masks, and supportive information. Project Brown Bag is more than distributing a bag of essential goods; outreach efforts also include community engagement for an often-forgotten group of individuals. Today, the Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens network of food pantries, senior centers, residences and home-delivered meals have provided more than 4 million meals during the crisis. Still, we need to do more. In the months ahead, Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens will continue to serve these communities severely impacted, daily living out our mission of service to others. As we move forward, we are guided by these words from Pope Francis, "We need to rediscover the concreteness of small things, the small acts of kindness shown to those who are close to us." ■

Catholic Charities Helps 2,650 Families in Need on Thanksgiving and Christmas

Despite the ongoing health crisis, Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens was fortunate to continue to host its Annual Turkey Giveaway and Annual Santa Toy Shoppe for families in need. Masked staff and volunteers practicing social distancing distributed 1,400 turkeys. Generous donors and supporters of the 12 - 14 pound turkeys included: Al & Maria Catanese, E-J Electric Installation Co., ACE Endico, Steamfitters, and New York City District Council of Carpenters. The USDA Farmers to Families Box Program also assisted by providing a large box of other food and produce (locally sourced in New York State).

Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens also provided food vouchers for turkey dinner fixings to each family in increments of \$25.00 for a total of \$25,000. For Christmas, the agency collected and distributed toys and TD Bank gift cards in increments of \$25 per child to 1,250 families in need. In total, Catholic Charities distributed \$75,000 in gift cards to families with children.

Along with gift cards, the agency gave out Christmas toys as well. Collecting toys proved a community effort, with Catholic Charities hosting various pop-up Toy Drives throughout Brooklyn and Queens, including at all Brooklyn and Queens Investors Bank locations and Bay Ridge restaurants, thanks to the Bay Ridge Restaurant Coalition. Other community donors include the NYC District Council of Carpenters, friends of Don Costello, the Sonner Family/Western Beef, Zara Realty, ClearCaptions, residents of the Shore Towers in Astoria, Count on US, Fontbonne Hall Academy, The Custom House Pub, Church of the Virgin Mary, Parkway Community Church, Empire BlueCross BlueShield, St. Vincent Ferrer, St. Paul, and St. Agnes, St. Anselm, St. Patrick, St. Charles Borromeo, St. Matthew, Our Lady of Angels, St. Mark, St. Jude, Holy Family Church, St. Laurence Roman Catholic Church, St. Finbar, St. Brigid, Our Lady of Solace, St. Bernard of Clairvaux, Our Lady of the Angelus, St. Francis of Assisi, Our Lady of Hope, Our Lady of Mercy, Our Lady Queen of the Martyrs, St. Helen, local parishes and schools throughout the Diocese of Brooklyn and community members. ■



Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens Behavioral Health Programs Assist Communities Devastated by COVID-19

Although the coronavirus has significantly decreased group work and in-person appointments, the staff at the Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens behavioral health centers have developed creative measures to continue serving our 8,000 neighbors in need. All agency Integrated Health and Wellness Clinics, Rehabilitation, and Recovery Programs have worked tirelessly to assist communities devastated by the COVID-19 health crisis.

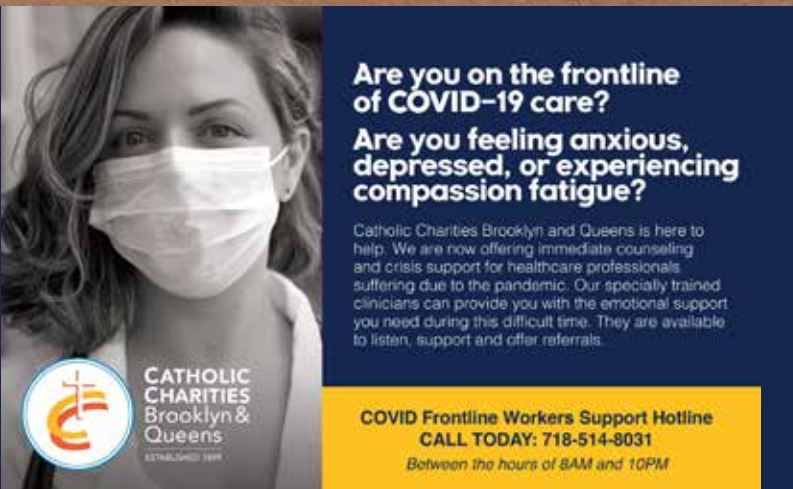
At the onset of the pandemic, management and personnel at our programs rapidly transitioned traditional forms of service to meet clients' needs. Telehealth expanded exponentially with COVID-19, and all treatment sites now offer and receive telehealth services, and the Corona Clinic's on-site Genoa pharmacy has provided home delivery due to COVID-19. We have also added services geared explicitly towards treating essential workers who are experiencing stress and other symptoms of PTSD.

Our five mental health clinics, including the newly opened clinic in East Flatbush, Brooklyn, focuses on rebuilding lives and compassionately serving those dealing with mental illness and substance use disorders. We continue to offer crisis care, striving to help stabilize and treat in the most clinically appropriate and cost-effective settings while also offering the least restrictive and traumatizing environment.

The Catholic Charities Behavioral Health Centers—each located in Jamaica, Corona, Rockaway and Glendale Queens, and Flatbush Brooklyn, compassionately serve those dealing with mental illness and substance use disorders, with services provided in an integrated trauma-informed care setting. Our highly specialized practitioners and staff lend a professional hand to those in need of behavioral health care, regardless of ability to pay.

Some of our programs offered at our clinic include crisis mental health services, including 24-hour mobile crisis teams, emergency crisis intervention, and crisis stabilization, mental health and substance use screening, assessment, and diagnosis, including risk assessment, outpatient mental health counseling services (individual, family & group therapy), substance use counseling for children ages 13 and older, case management, psychiatric rehabilitation services (vocational, social and peer) peer support, benefits coordination and, intensive community-based mental health care for members of the armed forces and veterans.

Catholic Charities recently received a grant from NY Project Hope, a New York State Crisis Counseling Program that provides support, outreach, and education to help individuals and communities cope with COVID-19. Services include an emotional support helpline, information about stress management, coping skills, and links to much-needed resources. Individuals may access our services at 718-722-6001. ■





Construction Begins on New Affordable Senior Housing at the Bishop Valero Residence in Astoria, Queens

This past summer, Catholic Charities Progress of Peoples Development Corporation began construction on the new Bishop Valero Residence, a \$62 million development to provide 102 units of affordable apartments for low-income seniors and formerly homeless adults with supportive services in Astoria, Queens. The project will be built on the former parking lot of the current Catholic Charities Catherine Sheridan Senior Housing, which is located directly across the street on 31st Road in the Astoria community of Queens.

Located at 23-11 31st Road, the Catholic Charities Bishop Valero Residence will be a six-story, 84,900 square foot building with on-site supportive social services for residents featuring a 6,400 square foot, 200-seat capacity community senior center on the ground floor of the building provided and operated by Catholic Charities Neighborhood Services, an affiliate agency of Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens.

In 2016, Catholic Charities joined a coalition with LiveOn NY that heavily advocated for changes to the New York City



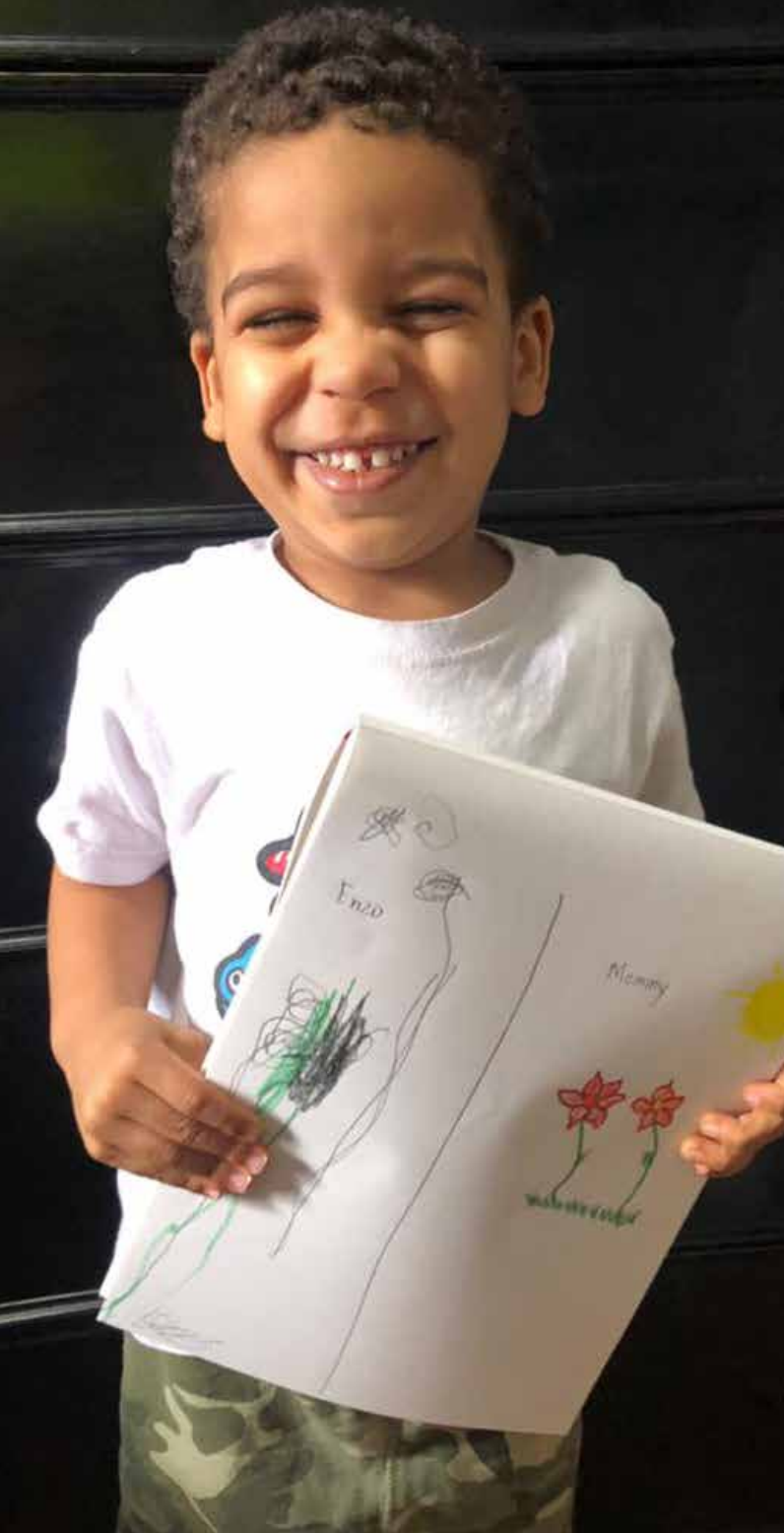
zoning resolution. Approved by the New York City Council, the changes, called Zoning for Quality and Affordability (ZQA), included allowing buildings with affordable or senior housing to be taller, eliminating parking requirements for affordable or affordable senior housing located near subway lines, and changing rules which affect the shape of new and enlarged buildings, effectively allowing agencies like Catholic Charities to build crucial affordable housing units on underutilized parking lots within existing housing

portfolios.

The Catholic Charities Bishop Valero Residence Development Team consists of Dattner Architects; Monadnock Construction, Inc., General Contractor; KOW / ARMA Consultants, Owner's Representative; Bright Power, Inc., Sustainability Consultant; and A. Larovere Consulting, Development Consultant.

The Catholic Charities Catherine Sheridan Apartments was built in 1978 and currently has 240 apartments for low-income seniors. ■





Catholic Charities Early Childhood Development Centers Transition to Virtual Classrooms Offering Students a Safe At-Home Educational Environment

During the COVID-19 crisis, children and families across New York City transitioned from in-school sessions to virtual classrooms as a way to flatten the curve. At Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens, children received daily remote learning from their teachers and parents received daily family engagement activities from social service staff. In addition, staff members contacted families each day via telephone or other electronic/mobile apps to follow up on the health status of each child and family member, connecting them as needed to other resources such as health, mental health, food and other services.

Our Early Childhood Development Centers engaged in remote cognitive learning and practiced reading, writing, spelling and drawing through, though not limited to, arts and crafts and cooking. This allowed students to continue their education from the safety of their own homes as families became acclimated to a new form of learning.

For members of Early Childhood Services with students unable to access electronics at home, Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens distributed 75 32GB iPads, made possible by a generous donation to the agency. Through this contribution, children and their families are able to stay connected during the pandemic.

As the pandemic continues, Catholic Charities Early Childhood Services closely monitors the outbreak, CDC and Department of Health and Mental Hygiene guidelines to ensure a safe and effective transition to in-class learning. Through the COVID-19 Hot Zone Alert Tracker, staff monitors the information gathered to determine which sites can begin offering in-class learning on a hybrid model--two days remote and three days on-site. To date, full remote learning begins for schools with zip codes in red zones, staff is on-site with remote learning for children in orange zones for three half days in-person, and two days remote for those in yellow zones. ■





BOB GARNETTE

DRIVER, CATHOLIC CHARITIES HOME DELIVERED MEALS

IN THE NEWS —Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens Braves Snow To Keep Homebound Seniors Fed During Pandemic

Adapted from Currents News / NET TV 2/2/2021

Bob Garnette has braved the pandemic, so a little — or a lot— of snow is an obstacle he's willing to overcome.

For the last 14 years, Bob has been driving around Queens delivering food to homebound seniors for Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens home delivered meals program, but none of those years were anything like this. "It's been a struggle for them, they can't get out and especially on a day like today, they really appreciate the meals," said Bob.

9,000 meals-a-month used to be average, but when the pandemic hit, that number shot up. In December, Catholic Charities delivered more than 13,000 meals to seniors in Northeast Queens. Over the course of the pandemic, we have taken on more than 200 new clients, some of whom haven't left their homes in nearly a year, especially not on days like this.

"Now we've really had to take on that role of being, sometimes, the only person they see delivering that hot meal and their point person to the outside world letting their families and case workers know how they've been doing and helping with whatever we can," said Jennifer Llamosi, the program manager.

Over the years, Bob has gotten to know his clients and they've gotten to know him. He knows what they like and don't like. Every senior signed up for the program gets a meal, juice, bread and milk — the basics. But the pandemic has made doing this job anything but simple.

"We have a mask on, we have the meal in a plastic bag, we put it on the door knob, we knock, stand six feet away, wait for the client to come out so it's not like before when we could just walk in and put it on that client's table," Jennifer explained.

But the distance doesn't break the bond. Bob's connection to the seniors on his route comes with loss. "I've known these people for a number of years so it has an effect on you," he told Currents News. "You try not to let it wear you down but they always pop back into your head, as soon as you pass their house and they're not there anymore, so there is some sadness."

The feeling of loss might always be there, but so will the reward of making a difference long after the snow melts. ■

Catholic Charities Helps to Bring Access to the Much-Needed COVID-19 Vaccine to Agency Seniors

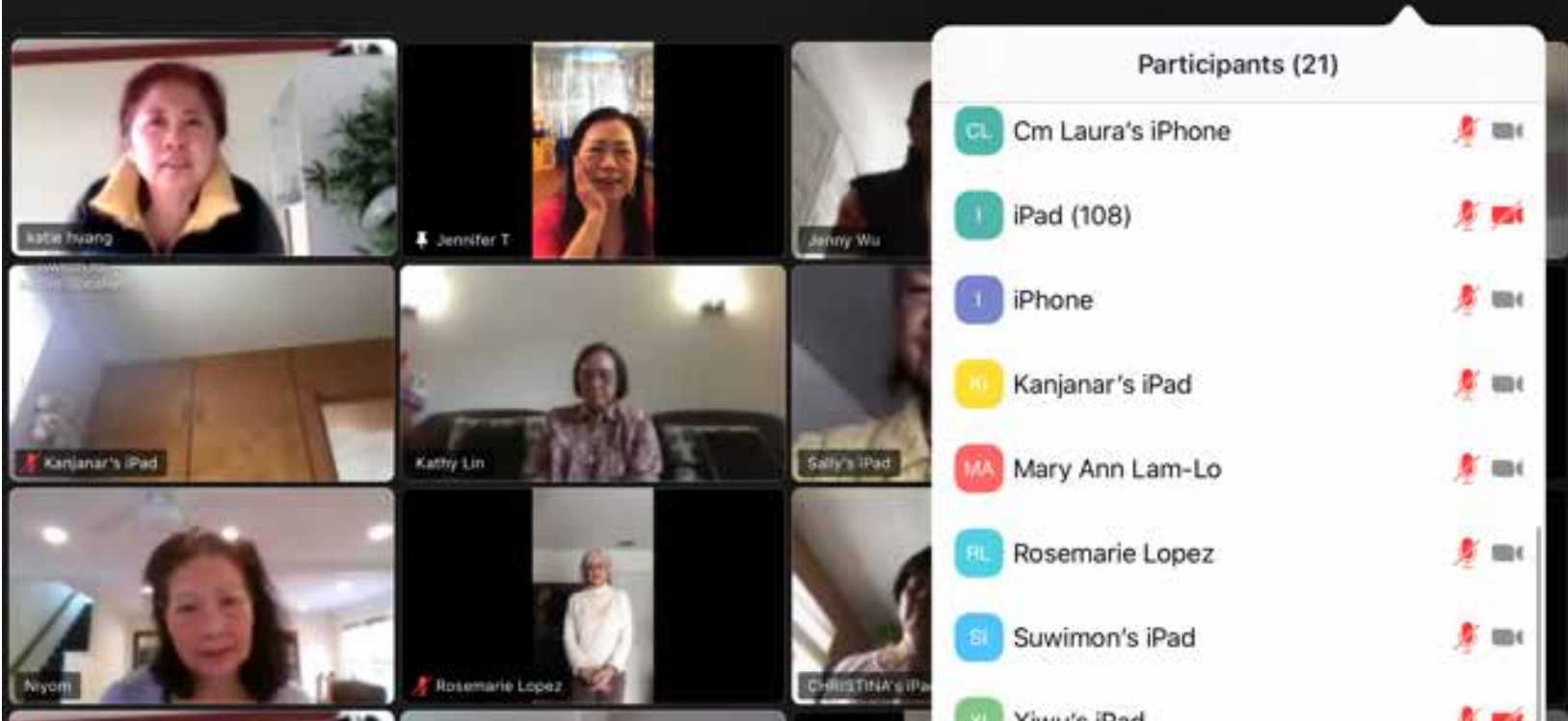
Catholic Charities' Community Health and Wellness Services partnered with The Floating Hospital to bring the much-needed second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine to over 70 senior tenants, members of the Catholic Charities senior centers and some of their caretakers.

Seniors were transported to and from The Floating Hospital from their respective apartments and senior centers on behalf of Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens, maintaining social distancing to protect a community at highest risk of infection.

"There's so much anxiety out in the community, and one of our biggest goals was working with the most vulnerable in the population. Seniors were at the top of our list," explained Richard Slizeski, Senior Vice President of Mission. "It's a game changer for people when you have the vaccine, it puts you in a different place."

Participants represented the Catholic Charities Catherine Sheridan Senior Residence and Monsignor Thomas Campbell Apartments along with the Peter Dellamonica – Steinway Senior Center. Catholic Charities will continue scheduling vaccinations to help keep vulnerable neighbors in our communities safe. ■





Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens Senior Services Remains Steadfast in Assisting Seniors During this Extraordinary Time

The Catholic Charities Senior Centers are not just a home away from home for seniors throughout Brooklyn and Queens. For many seniors, the Catholic Charities Senior Center community is the only communication and friendly voice they have to look forward to each day. While the pandemic has changed how Catholic Charities provides services to our seniors, it hasn't stopped us from providing necessary services for the more than 18,595 seniors we serve annually.

All classes and programs are virtual, free, and open to all adults 60 and older with access to a phone or device. Through our virtual programming, Catholic Charities' 17 Senior Centers across Brooklyn and Queens offer over 200 classes per month. Since the onset of the pandemic, our Senior Center staff continues to make daily follow up calls to ensure that the NYC food delivery program and all other services they need are working as expected. Senior Center staff also makes sure the seniors' medical appointments are up to date and provide transportation if required. In addition to city delivered meals, the Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens Senior Center staff coordinates the distribution of shelf stable meal packages from CityMeals, as well as donations from local groceries and local restaurants.

Most importantly, all seniors are kept up to date on how access to COVID-19 vaccines, COVID-19 vaccine education, and current CDC guidance on preventing and avoiding the spread of the virus. We are eagerly informing the seniors that the COVID-19 vaccines are just as safe as other vaccines. And through outreach provided by the New York City Department for the Aging, seniors gain access to webinar discussions on why older New Yorkers can confidently get vaccinated against COVID-19.

As for the Catholic Charities Senior Centers' variety of virtual programming, staff coordinate and schedule all remote activities through zoom, freeconferencecalls.com and YouTube, and pay extra attention to providing activities that are geared towards helping seniors stay connected and reducing isolation. Activities vary by center and include educational, recreational and health programming ranging from dance, exercise, theatre arts, musical presentations, chat groups, photo and painting clubs, library by mail, nutritional workshops and information sessions on benefits, and all New York City resources and services available to seniors.

Our comprehensive case management and Naturally Occurring Retiring Community (NORC) programs for adults aged 60 and older continue to monitor wellness calls and conduct assessments to over 3,660 seniors. Services are provided by the telephone except in emergency cases. Along with comprehensive case assistance, our case management and NORC programs offer information and referral, home-delivered meals for the homebound, transportation, supportive and entitlement counseling, access to virtual caregiver support groups and advocacy.

Geriatric mental health counseling and bereavement are a crucial component of our services and has been provided to over 500 of our seniors to date. Seniors with Alzheimer's disease or related forms of dementia, and their families, are provided with virtual group activities, workshops, case management, information and referral service support to prevent isolation.

Throughout this pandemic, Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens has remained steadfast in assisting those in need during this extraordinary time. Even though our senior program facilities remain closed to seniors per NYC guidelines, the Catholic Charities Senior Centers are open for staff five days a week, from 8 AM – 4 PM, with at least three to four staff members on-site every day. Although seniors cannot visit the program due to safety concerns, they know we are there for them and are just a phone call away. ■

2020 Highlights

Members of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce accompany the Seoul Business Agency to deliver a generous donation of personal protective equipment (PPE) care packages to Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens for seniors at the Catholic Charities St. Charles Jubilee Senior Center. ►



► Catholic Charities joined forces with NYC to promote participation in the 2020 Census. Although the pandemic threw a curve ball into the plans, staff members were still able to reach more than twice their census project goals, namely 263,455 engagements, 3,955 pledges and 30,494 complete censuses. Staff members reached out to the community during emergency food pop-ups and other community events which drew unprecedented numbers, and extensive efforts were made to promote the census online, with Catholic Charities generating nearly 2 million responses to their social media posts.



Late last summer, Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens held a Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony for the new Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens Behavioral Health Center located at 1623 Flatbush Avenue in East Flatbush, Brooklyn to focus on rebuilding lives and compassionately serving those dealing with mental illness and substance use disorders. ►



Volunteers from St. Charles Borromeo Church in Brooklyn Heights prepare grab-and-go bags for neighbors in need during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Catholic Charities food pantry moved to St. Charles Borromeo in September 2020 to give clients more access in an open-space setting. ►



◀ This summer, the Young Adult Empowerment Strategies for Success (YESS!) Program provided remote workshops and job preparation services for youth aged 18 to 28 who are both out of work and out of school and live in Brooklyn and Queens. Youth were provided guidance/counseling, referrals to a variety of services, interview preparation and more.

Pictured are members of the Catholic Charities Community Health and Wellness Services team during a Halloween themed pop-up food distribution in the Bay Ridge neighborhood of Brooklyn. This emergency food pop-up was one of several sponsored by Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic as a way to help those most in need during this extraordinary time. ►





**CATHOLIC CHARITIES
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Bishop Joseph M. Sullivan Memorial Classic

Thursday, June 17, 2021
North Hills Country Club, NY

Bishop's Humanitarian Award Dinner

Thursday, September 16, 2021
Cipriani Wall Street, NYC

We hope you will join us! For details, contact the Office of Development and Communications at 718-722-6202 or ccbq.events@ccbq.org

The 2021 Coat of Arms Mass and Luncheon, which would have taken place this Spring, is canceled. However, please consider becoming a member. For details and more information, contact: Martin Golden at martin.golden@ccbq.org or 718-722-6024.



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