



May 1, 2020

Dear Parishioners,

Some of you might be interested in this and able to help. The coronavirus pandemic is devastating many charities. Clearly the parish has been hurt financially, but I will be sure that we get through all this and remain in good fiscal health. We will pay all our bills, salaries and assessments. I can never thank you enough for continuing your support of Saint Philomena. We have no other means of income, as you know. I am always thankful for our Parish Finance Committee and our procedures, which are professional and honest always.

But this letter is about Catholic Charities in the four counties of the Archdiocese of Newark. The coronavirus pandemic has put great stress on many of our programs, especially the shelters that we run in Newark and Jersey City. Many persons, individuals and families are homeless and many are sick.

Also, our behavioral health programs are under great strain. We serve people with mental illness and people with emotional issues and addictions who rely on Catholic Charities to carry on with their lives. The hungry, poor, disabled, isolated and needy are all welcomed.

Catholic Charities is well-run and overseen by an extraordinary Board of eighteen men and women. They are at the top of their fields of business, law, medicine, education and religion. They include executives, attorneys, physicians, professors and clergy. None receive any compensation for their membership on this active Board. I am privileged to serve as Chairman of the Board of Catholic Charities and have done so since 2016. Once in a while, independent of the Board, I initiate a special appeal here at Saint Philomena. The results have been very special over the years and I am very proud and thankful. As you may recall, we do this around Thanksgiving time each year. But now we are in crisis mode so I propose this special appeal.

True to our name we treat every person who enters our doors and programs with dignity and respect. That is what Catholics should do! Though this is a difficult time or perhaps *because* it is a difficult time, might you consider a special donation to Catholic Charities? A gift of \$50 or \$100 or even more would go a long way and do much good.

If you are interested in helping the poor among us through this great Agency, please send a gift directly to this mailing address:

Mr. John Westervelt, CEO
Catholic Charities
590 North 7th Street
Newark, NJ 07107

John is one of the best people I know. And so are you, honestly! Thank you for considering this possibility.

Sincerely yours in Jesus Christ,



Rev. Msgr. Robert J. Fuhrman
Pastor
Chairman, Board of Trustees