

Local News

## Emergency fund raises \$260K to feed struggling families



Volunteer Maria Sacco of Martha's Choice Marketplace, a food pantry located at the archdiocesan Catholic Social Services (CSS) Montgomery County family service center, gives a shopping cart full of food to Joesahapa Montague to take home to her family, in this December 2013 file photo. The Catholic Foundation of Greater Philadelphia's Emergency Relief Fund has helped restock CSS pantries rapidly depleted by the coronavirus pandemic. (Photo by Sarah Webb)

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The Catholic Foundation of Greater Philadelphia (CFGP) continues to raise money through its Emergency Relief Fund to aid area food pantries impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thanks to significant support by individuals and community organizations, the fund has raised more than \$260,000 since its launch in March and continues to receive donations.

Of the total, \$252,000 has been distributed from the fund to beneficiary Catholic organizations as of Aug. 7.

The organizations operated by Catholic Social Services (CSS) of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and the amounts received include St. John's Hospice in Philadelphia, \$30,000; Casa del Carmen Family Service Center, Philadelphia, \$10,000 and \$15,000; Northeast Family Service Center, Philadelphia, \$10,000 and \$5,000; Delaware County Family Service Center, Chester, \$10,000 and \$15,000; Montgomery County Family Service Center, Norristown, \$18,000; Southwest Family Service Center, Philadelphia, \$14,000 and \$15,000; Bucks County Family Service Center, \$10,000.

In addition, the five county-based family service centers of CSS received a \$20,000 grant to be shared among each, and CSS food pantries in the archdiocese also shared a total of \$80,000 to share.

The Catholic Foundation reported that more than 11,521 families were given emergency food assistance from six food pantry locations throughout Philadelphia, Bucks, Delaware and Montgomery Counties. Over 286,000 pounds of food have been distributed.

Last spring as the impact of COVID-19 began to be felt most acutely, the food pantries were reporting an unprecedented increase in client volume of 100% in the first few weeks of the nationwide shutdown, with increases building weekly.

"Food and personal hygiene items are the most important things people need right now," said Sarah O. Hanley, CFGP's president and CEO, said last March in a [CatholicPhilly.com story](#). "With so many businesses closing and families unable to return to work, this need is becoming increasingly critical by the day."

Now, some five months since the coronavirus pandemic forced millions into quarantine and precipitated a severe economic slowdown, communities throughout the United States are slowly beginning to recover. But the road ahead may be long, and many who suffered the impact of the pandemic may never return to what for them was once “normal.”

“While all our lives have changed since the onset of COVID, one constant remains — the generous support of our faithful donors to help those most in need in our community,” said Jim Amato, secretary for Catholic Human Services of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. “On behalf of those we serve and our staff, thanks for always being there with and for us.”

CFGP’s Emergency Relief Fund remains committed to community support. To donate to this fund and help provide emergency food assistance, visit [www.TheCFGP.org/ERF](http://www.TheCFGP.org/ERF).

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