



# TO TEACH WHO CHRIST IS

A Newsletter for the Campaign for Parishes, Catholic Education and Faith Formation December 2020

## Archdiocese of Chicago and Catholic Charities Raise \$20 Million for Joint COVID-19 Relief Effort

The joint fund is one of the largest U.S. Catholic relief responses to COVID-19 and is being deployed to assist thousands of people without regard to their faith, racial, ethnic, or gender identities.

Sixty percent of the funds have been deployed to Catholic Charities to significantly increase assistance to individuals and families in need as the pandemic's economic impact has dramatically increased the demand for services compared to a year ago. This assistance includes food and housing support, burial aid for victims of COVID-19, and domestic violence counseling and prevention measures.

Forty percent has been deployed to other archdiocesan assistance efforts including emergency scholarships for Catholic school students, support for Kolbe House, the archdiocese's inmate re-entry ministry, and other critical efforts.

Thank you for your ongoing support of the *To Teach Who Christ Is* campaign and the relief fund. To learn more or support your parish offertory or the COVID-19 Relief Fund, please visit [archchicago.org/support](https://archchicago.org/support).

## St. James Church in Chicago Continues to Serve the Community Through the Pandemic

Last year, we connected with Fr. John Edmunds, S.T., priest at St. James church, located at 2907 South Wabash Avenue in Chicago. We included an article in our December 2019 edition of the newsletter on the parish's experience with the campaign and the ways the staff and parishioners graciously give back to the local community during the Christmas season.

With St. James continuing to work toward their *To Teach Who Christ Is* goals, we decided to follow up on their progress and how COVID-19 has affected their food pantry and other avenues of giving.



Pictured above are volunteers at the parish's food pantry providing pre-packaged meals for those in need.

"COVID-19 has had a dramatic impact on the food pantry," said Fr. John. "Of course, we have had to purchase PPE and sanitizing equipment. The amount of people we serve has increased by over 5,000 people this year so far."

Because many people have to stay home during this time, they aren't able to enter the food pantry, and because of this, grocery delivery and pick-up has increased as well. The parish has volunteers that deliver pre-packaged bags and boxes outdoors. Now that it's cold out, the parish has purchased tents and heaters so their volunteers have a secure environment to serve the local community.

For Thanksgiving, the parish normally hosts an in-person luncheon for the senior community, but due to the pandemic, the parish shifted their giving strategy and delivered 164 Thanksgiving meals prepared by a local restaurant.

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"Normally on Christmas we have a sit-down luncheon for the homeless and their families, and last year when we opened our doors, over two hundred came," said Fr. John. "Sadly, this year will be different, but we are grateful to still provide meals with our Plates and Presents Program with meals prepared by Polo Café. Individuals and families will be able to pick up their meals and take them with them."

The past several years, families in need would approach Fr. John and the parish to help during the Christmas season. The parish would ask for Christmas wish lists and would help fulfill their lists along with sharing parishes, St. Edna and Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Faith, Hope and Charity, and several neighboring parishes.

"This year we won't be able to have the same degree of contact, but due to the generosity of our sharing and neighboring parishes, we will be able to provide gift cards to ensure that every family will have a Merry Christmas," said Fr. John.

As far as *To Teach Who Christ Is* goes, the parish continues to work towards completing their campaign goals.

"After replacing the windows and repairing the roof of the church, we are discussing replacing the boiler in the church and school," said Fr. John. "The windows, roof and boiler were our three commitments. Because our parishioners donated very generously to the campaign, we hope to have some resources left over for additional maintenance projects like painting the interior of the church."

A huge thanks to St. James for giving back to the community throughout the year and during the Christmas season. To learn more about St. James, please visit [stjameswabash.org](http://stjameswabash.org).

## Campaign Parish, St. Cletus, Serves Through Food Pantry This Christmas



The St. Cletus parish food pantry continues to serve the community thanks to donations and volunteers.

St. Cletus, a parish currently involved with the *To Teach Who Christ Is* campaign, has made changes to their food pantry to keep people safe during the pandemic. Prior to the pandemic, St. Cletus, located at 600 West 55th Street in La Grange, served around 50 families a week and now they are currently serving 95 families a week. The parish now offers pre-packed bags with curbside pick-up and has been making home deliveries to those at risk. St. Cletus has seen an increase of 126 percent of households receiving food and expects this number to continue to increase as the year comes to an end.

The parish continues to collect food donations and household necessities during this time. If you're interested in donating, they can be dropped off at any time at the food pantry donation bin near the front door of the rectory. In addition, the parish is accepting tax-deductible donations to help the parish continue their services. All donations go directly to the operation of their pantry. Funds allow the parish to purchase what clients need and the necessary safety and sanitation items for volunteers.

Please visit [stcletusparish.com/ministries/socialconcerns/foodpantry](http://stcletusparish.com/ministries/socialconcerns/foodpantry) to learn more or donate.

## CAMPAIGN UPDATE

**Overall Campaign Goal: \$350,000,000**

Total Raised to Date: \$424,588,610\*

Percent of Goal Pledged: 121%

Pledges Paid to Date: \$264,070,741

Percent Paid to Date: 75%

\*includes cash, documented pledges and bequests

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