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[A Lenten message from Bishop Andrzej Zglejszewski](#)
[SPANISH VERSION](#)

You Provide Love and Care in Our Community!



Recently, the New York State Department of Health released a new report, with a staggering statistic: more than 1 in 5 Long Island adults worry about having enough money to buy nutritious meals. And while it is heartbreaking that so many of our neighbors worry about the cost of food, the reality is that food is only one piece of the puzzle for someone struggling to make ends meet.

The excessive cost of housing, heating costs, especially during this extremely chilly winter, gas prices, and healthcare costs also add a heavy burden on a family's budget. It is certainly challenging to live on Long Island. Many families turn to our Parish Social Ministries to supplement their source of food and for relief to some expenses for their families. The PSM is a partnership between Catholic Charities and the parishes in our Long Island faith community. The ministry is rooted in the gifts of the people of God, enabling those within the parish community to receive spiritual nourishment by serving and supporting those in need. These PSM operate robust and incredibly active programs.

We recently spoke with Katie Spellman, Coordinator of the PSM of St. John the Evangelist, Center Moriches. Here is what she shared about the program at this parish. *"We provide*

services across many avenues. We started with a food pantry in the 70s, and then a thrift shop. We are always looking to add programs. We have a Street Ministry that goes to the railroad station in Shirley serving folks on the street with hot meals, and clothing. There is a community of people who come for the welcome and love that volunteers share. We have a Chicken Ministry, so we get fresh eggs for the food pantry. The Garden Ministry, known as Heaven's Harvest grows tomatoes and green, eggplant and cucumber beans, radishes, and summer squash. The plants all started as seedlings and the harvest will go into early October.

We have a monthly community hot meal dinner; volunteers make meals at home and people come to share this meal. This builds community and hospitality by bringing people together and allows volunteers to share talents in different ways.

The needs have grown immensely in the last year, there has been a continual need for food. The increase was so great that we had to tighten our parameters to have food for everyone. In the pantry, clients can serve themselves to get exactly what they want. We can never have enough food. One night we served 37 families in one hour. With the high price of food, the needs in the community are growing especially in our Spanish community so we try to get bilingual volunteers to help these families.

To hear more about this program [CLICK HERE](#)

If you or anyone you know needs assistance, please seek out the assistance of your local Parish Social Ministry.

HAPPENING IN THE DIOCESE

Please join us for a Mass and Brunch Fundraiser in support of our Senior Priests living at St. Pius X Residence. The Celebrant for the Mass will be the Most Reverend John O. Barres, Bishop of Rockville Centre.

**April 27, 2024
11:00 AM Mass
12:00 Noon Brunch**

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