

CTR Parish Mobilized Forces to Aid Victims of Hurricane Ida

On September 1, 2021 nearly half of all Manville residents and businesses suffered from the flooding caused by Hurricane Ida. The people were unprepared since the storm was not expected to cause such a catastrophic event, but the amount of rain that came down so fiercely and endlessly on previously saturated ground was overwhelming. Some had minor damage but many, many had severe damage to their properties; some with total loss of homes, automobiles, personal property, etc.

Christ the Redeemer Parish also suffered massive damage in Christ the King Church and School. During and after a preliminary assessment of our own damages and taking preventative measures to avoid further ruin, we quickly set out to supply affected flood victims with food, cleaning supplies and cleanup services. On Labor Day parish volunteers formed four teams of six and two teams of four and spent several hours of their holiday providing cleaning services to the flooded families who requested help. We also organized to provide cleaning supplies, clothing, gift cards, food, and hot and cold meals.

For several days after, volunteers from our parish drove house to house throughout the town feeding people as they worked cleaning out damaged homes and establishments. Fortunately, we had frozen 900 stuffed cabbage and many lbs. of kielbasa left from our Summer Festival. The stuffed cabbage, kielbasa and 72 lbs. of sauerkraut were cooked and packaged. Over time meals of stuffed cabbage, sauerkraut and kielbasa sandwiches, turkey and ham sandwiches, chicken and rice casseroles were distributed along with bottled water. We also provided those assisting the flood victims and distributed some meals to the Manville Police and Department of Public Works staff. Day after day, members of our congregation prepared and delivered meals to feed ALL in need, whether parishioners or not.

In addition to the generous monetary and gift card donations made by **Christ the Redeemer parishioners**, donations and help poured in from many near and far.

- **Mary Mother of God in Hillsborough** donated \$1500 in gift cards from Shop-Rite, Lowe's, Home Depot and Walmart.

-**St. Joseph's Parish in Millstone** delivered many bags of non-perishable food, paper towels, and cleaning supplies. Additionally, they offered monetary assistance to those who experienced flood damage to their homes.

-**St. Bernard's Parish in Bridgewater** donated a number of casseroles.

- **St. Mary's Parish in Pompton Lakes** sent gift cards and a box-truck filled with food, new socks and towels, frozen meat, and cleaning supplies. Over 2,000 towels and pairs of socks were distributed. Thus, in just one day, we delivered over 100 bags of groceries, bath towels and 800 pairs of socks.

- **B&L Market in Manville** donated loaves of bread and **the Best Little Market on Camplain Road** made sandwiches and donated cans of soda.

- **Halinka's Deli in Hillsborough** donated pirogis, chicken soup, bigos, and babka bread for those in need.

- The **Manville/Hillsborough Elks** hosted a picnic for all victims of the flood. Our parish donated socks to give out there.

- **Lowell Foods** brought five pallets of Polish food that included jars of pickles, canned fish, spaghetti sauce, sauerkraut, bigos, jelly, pork stew, bread, cookies, and candies. They also provided cleaning supplies, and toiletries.

- **The Notre Dame Alumni Club of Central NJ** sent food, hand sanitizers, and a monetary donation.

- **West Milford** contributed new underwear, socks, toiletries, baby supplies and school supplies.

- Members of **The Church of God in Christ Mennonites** traveled from PA to help clean/repair homes.

From the abundance of these donations, parish volunteers assembled and distributed bags of non-perishable food, paper towels, and cleaning supplies.

People throughout the community and various organizations donated new and gently used clothing that filled our parish auditorium. Over a period of two weeks, parish volunteers oversaw the collection, categorization, and distribution of the clothing. We are now conducting a winter coat drive.

In summary, there was an overwhelming outpouring from our parish and many others to provide aid and comfort to all those who were displaced or sustained damage to their homes and property. May God bless them and all those, and there are so many, who gave of their time, generosity, and prayers to help so many individuals and families who suffered such great losses. To quote Jesus, "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you."