

Quarterly Mission Moment - July 2021

 ccdallas.org/ccd-mission-moment-july-2021/



Summer is upon us—the days are longer, the world seems to be returning to some semblance of normality, and as we continue to emerge from the darkness and changes the past year brought upon us, we are reminded of this truth: “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” (John 1:5)

Despite the hardships of the past year, the darkness has not won, largely because of you. Each of you, each organization that has partnered with us, has brought the light of Christ to hundreds of thousands of people in our community. We are incredibly grateful for you. And we are humbled and encouraged by how successful Catholic Charities has been in our endeavors — all of which seek to address the root causes of poverty, hunger, and homelessness. As you read this newsletter, and obtain a glimpse of the impact your support (be it time, talent, or treasure) has had on the communities of Northern Texas, we hope you too are encouraged to find solutions to systemic problems and that you join us in bringing light to those who feel trapped by darkness.

A blue graphic with the Catholic Charities Dallas logo in the top left. Below the logo is a yellow box with the text 'New Program'. The main text reads 'Mental Health Support, Meet "Hope"'. Below this is a paragraph of text describing the 'Hope' chat bot. On the right side of the graphic is a stylized illustration of a woman with dark hair, wearing a light blue collared shirt, smiling.

 Catholic Charities Dallas

New Program

Mental Health Support, Meet "Hope"

Hope is a bilingual mental health chat bot designed to help you find coping mechanisms for depression and anxiety. Hope offers a chance to chat about how you are feeling, free of judgement or shame.

New Program at CCD

Meet “Hope”

According to mental health disorder statistics, about 1 in 4 Americans, ages 18 +, suffer from a diagnosable disorder in any given year. However, COVID-19 has profoundly affected all of us in ways we are still unpacking. In fact, In January 2021, 41% of adults reported symptoms of anxiety and/or depressive disorder. Untreated mental health has resounding impacts — it affects the individual, their family, their work, and the community at large.

With a desire to tend to an individual’s whole being, and recognizing the importance of taking care of one’s mental health, we created the Hope Project. Hope is a bilingual mental health chat bot designed to help people find coping mechanisms for depression and anxiety. Hope gives people an opportunity to talk to someone who will not judge or shame them, provides them with concrete opportunities for help, and teaches them skills that can be applied immediately to improve one’s daily quality of life.

Support from Hope is offered 24/7. Hope is available for anyone 18+ and with parents’ permission children ages 12-18, for people residing in Collin, Dallas, Ellis, Fannin, Grayson, Hunt, Navarro, Kaufman, and Rockwall counties.

To learn more about the Hope Project or to begin a conversation with Hope, visit ccdallas.org/hope-project.



New Summer Program

Together We Read

In a typical year, Summer Camp is held at Cardinal Farrell Community Center. This eight-week program focuses on providing students with engaging activities that are centered on reading, math, and science. Additionally, students receive swim lessons and enjoy field trips to local attractions, such as The Perot Museum. However, due to COVID-19, Educational Services had to adapt when planning for Summer 2021.

Noting the decline in literacy rates over 2020-2021, CCD Educational Services wanted to respond to this serious problem. Countless studies have shown a correlation between low literacy rates and poor health issues, low self-esteem, and an increase in poverty and incarceration rates. Through their hard work and innovation, Together We Read (TWR) was born.

TWR is a six-week summer reading program for students who have experienced a significant reading loss during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, it serves as a dual-generation program designed to equip parents with the necessary tools and resources to extend the building of reading skills into the home environment.





Children are separated by grade level and parents are in another classroom taking ESL classes with Readers 2 Leaders, a Together We Read partner. Parents are given activity kits that allow them to continue practicing English.

Together We Read will continue to help Catholic Charities address three significant community concerns: 20% of Dallas adults cannot read or write; 50% of five-year-olds are not ready for kindergarten, 60% of third graders are not reading at grade level.

We are excited to share that currently, one hundred students and eighty parents are enrolled! We look forward to the long-term effects this will have on our community and future generations!



Catholic Charities' Second Homelessness & Housing Facility

Launching Phase II

St. Jude Center – Park Central Renovations

We are so excited to share that each day we are closer to finishing the renovations on our new, 180-unit St. Jude Center – Park Central! In the near future, we will be welcoming residents, who were formerly homeless, to come live here.

As you may recall from our **March Mission Update**, Phase I focused on providing quarantine space for those suffering from COVID-19, as well as respite from inclement weather. As we move on to Phase II, our goal is to use this refurbished space as permanent supportive and/or transitional housing for the general homeless and housing-insecure population. The ability to provide a stable, supportive, permanent place for individuals to live

is monumental in overcoming the homeless situation in our community. Thanks to our partners — City Square, Metrocare, and VASH — we will be providing residents with an opportunity to access resources that will allow them to tend to their mental and physical needs, secure a job, and form a more stable life. Our hope is that by doing so, our residents will be able to become self-sufficient and move onto the next chapter of their life.



Volunteers prepare for a Mobile Food Distribution

Increased reach into the nine counties

Continuing the Fight Against Hunger

It's hard to fully comprehend the impact the Mobile Community Pantries have had. **Over six million** meals were distributed to 137,101 families in the last 52 weeks. This is a 58% increase in families served compared to a normal week.

Needless to say, the mobile food pantries have allowed us to cast our nets wider and serve more people in need, which was particularly important given the circumstances of this past year!

- Four trucks make up the Hunger Services fleet: Three Mobile Community Pantries and one large, refrigerated box truck.

- The trucks deliver to over 100 sites per month throughout the nine counties of the Diocese of Dallas.





In-person, Disaster Relief application event

Work throughout COVID-19 and Winter storm

Disaster Relief & Preparedness Services

The Disaster Team continues to help people financially recover from COVID-19 & the Winter storm. From July 2020-April 2021, Disaster Relief served 13,211 clients, established nine disaster sites, and trained 37 staff and volunteer members.

Disaster Relief and Preparedness Services is a holistic program designed to address the immediate and long-term needs of victims of natural disasters. Trained case managers provide relief in the form of financial and material aid, employment assistance, long-term recovery plan development, and help finding temporary and permanent housing.

This service is one of the only programs in the DFW area that offers long-term case management after a natural or personal disaster in addition to short-term assistance. The program empowers survivors of disasters to rebuild their lives and homes through programming, partnerships, and referrals. As you can see from the number of clients we served in a mere nine months, the need for these services is apparent and we could not do it without your help!



Receiving assistance during COVID-19

Client Story

From Giving to Receiving

"I was the Founder and CEO of a 9-year operational nonprofit organization. At 73-years, it was a big shock that I was having to seek assistance from another nonprofit agency to keep me afloat. Thank you for being there."

CCD Disaster Relief Client

Stories and letters from our clients remind us of our "why." It's easy to set goals, to be encouraged by milestones, and to be motivated by statistics, but at the end of the day, it is the person in front of us – their story, their journey – that matters most to all of us here at Catholic Charities. Below is a letter we have been given permission to share, from a client who benefited from the resources of our Disaster Team:

Good afternoon Mr. Adriansen,

I wanted to share my thoughts about Catholic Charities' involvement with the City of Plano Emergency Rental Assistance Program. It's my thought that it is a great marriage. The City of Plano is a well-run organization, and Catholic Charities was the perfect group with whom they could partner the economic relief program.

And, the program is so very important. So many people are caught in the trap of COVID-19 without catching the Virus. I was the Founder and CEO of a 9-year operational nonprofit organization, For the Children, Inc., d/b/a Arts & Education 4 DFW Youths, until March 13,

2020. We were of service to disadvantaged and at-risk youths. And, when they disappeared with the Pandemic, there was no place for us to go, nothing for us to do – for the children.

At 73-years, it was a big shock that I was having to seek assistance from another nonprofit agency to keep me afloat. Thank you for being there. There are hundreds of thousands of stories like mine, maybe millions, and the US Government is doing its best it can to help all of us through these terribly challenging financial times.

As a participant in the Program, I wanted you to know my appreciation for Catholic Charities and your involvement with the City of Plano.

Also, I have to share that I think Ms. Jeri Johnson is an exceptional Case Manager. She provided instructions that helped me get through the paperwork, all of which brought me into the fold to secure economic support from the Rental Assistance Program. YALL are doing an awesome job; thank you!

– James Rosenberg

Interested in supporting the mission of Catholic Charities?

Your gift directly supports the needs of North Texans by providing critical resources such as: food, shelter, education, legal advocacy, financial stability, and more!

We are answering God's call to serve all those in need.

[Make a gift](#)

[Check volunteer opportunities](#)

As a large-scale social service agency, Catholic Charities is leading new and exciting projects to bring greater impact to the most vulnerable populations of our community. Stay tuned for more information on these upcoming programs and events:

Programs

- Hunger Services – **Quarterly Mega Food Distribution** on July 30th at Dallas Executive Airport
- Together We're Better – 3rd wave of 16-week classes

Fall Events

- **Breakfast With the Bishop 2021** – October 7th at St. Paul the Apostle
- North Texas Giving Day – September 23rd