



March 13, 2020

Dear Friends,

Every day we at Catholic Charities make the decision to say “Yes” to helping those in need. That is an easy decision. I am writing to you today about a difficult decision we have made... We are canceling this year’s Catholic Charities Gala.

The decision was made with the best interest of our donors, our employees and our clients in mind.

As you know, the Washington, D.C., area is facing an unprecedented public health crisis in the coronavirus. Because the virus poses a threat to all of us, public health experts are encouraging people to avoid crowds to lessen the risk of contagion. Out of an abundance of caution, we have decided it’s appropriate not to gather together the people we cherish — you.

This would have marked the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Catholic Charities Gala, a time to celebrate the organization’s long history of service to the poor and needy of the District and Maryland.

While we won’t be together on April 4<sup>th</sup>, I hope you’ll take a few minutes to reflect on your place in the Catholic Charities community. It’s significant. Because of you, last year Catholic Charities provided 2.5 million meals, distributed 1 million pounds of food to pantries, provided 6,500 people legal services and served 8,500 people with medical and dental care. Your contributions to the gala and other fundraising efforts, enable us to do all we do. You are truly an esteemed partner in serving the poor.

With the current public health crisis, the need is only increasing. This decision also allows us to focus on our clients. We are diligently working to ensure we can continue to meet their needs, while safeguarding the health of our employees. While the event will not happen on April 4<sup>th</sup>, your yearly contribution to the gala is still so important to our ministry to those in need. **I know this is a big ask, but if there is any way you could still make your contribution for the good of our community, I’d be so grateful.** The need remains and is only growing during this time of unrest.

My regret is that I won’t have the opportunity to tell you face to face just what your support means to me personally, to Catholic Charities, and to the people we serve. This annual event is our largest fundraiser of the year and the cancellation will undoubtedly have an impact on our work, but we know it’s the right thing to do.



We know this is disappointing for all who planned to join us. We are evaluating all options, including the possibility of rescheduling, and we will keep you posted on our progress and decisions made. If you have questions about your donation to Catholic Charities' Gala, please contact our Development Team at 202-772-4331.

In the meantime, please connect with us on social media (@CCADW) and online (catholiccharitiesdc.org), where you'll find our latest news and stories of the people who have been helped thanks to your donations of time and treasure. Most importantly, be assured that all of us at Catholic Charities are thinking of you *now* with gratitude.

May God bless you,

Rev. Msgr. John J. Enzler  
President and CEO  
Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington