



**A Letter to the Catholic Faithful of the Diocese of Rockville Centre
From Bishop John O. Barres
Third Sunday of Easter, April 26, 2020**



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we celebrate the Third Sunday of Easter, the spread of COVID-19, in our Diocese is touching every one of you in one way or another. Nearly everyone has lost a loved one or a friend and it is certainly affecting how we go about our daily lives. I am particularly moved by a brief passage from the first reading this Sunday, from the Acts of the Apostles (2:14, 22-33):

*"I saw the Lord ever before me,
with him at my right hand I shall not be disturbed.
Therefore my heart has been glad and my tongue has exulted;
my flesh, too, will dwell in hope,
because you will not abandon my soul..."*

The Diocese of Rockville Centre is responding to the needs of Long Islanders both physically and spiritually, in a multitude of ways. One important element I would like to highlight in our Catholic community's frontline response to the coronavirus pandemic is our Catholic Home Care.

Part of the Catholic Health Services of Long Island, Catholic Home Care is working harder than ever during this crisis. On most days, it now serves more than 3,000 patients in their own homes.

An increasing percentage of these visits are related to COVID-19 illness. As you can imagine, Catholic Home Care clinicians are operating under extraordinary circumstances as they perform the necessary visiting nurse calls; physical and occupational therapy visits; medical social services counseling sessions; and home health aide services in patients' homes.

Despite the challenges, the 650 dedicated professionals and support staff of the Catholic Home Care team are working seven days a week to ensure every patient's home care needs are met.

Moreover, Catholic Home Care is innovating through the pandemic crisis to expand care through its Telehealth Program. Telehealth services are staffed by specially-trained clinicians, and patients are provided with telemonitoring devices to monitor their health multiple times each day.

Through Telehealth services, Catholic Home Care professionals partner with patients and their caregivers to take vitals such as a patient's heart rate, blood pressure, weight and oxygen saturation levels. This data is shared in real time with Catholic Home Care so that clinicians can provide enhanced feedback and services that meet the patient's day-to-day needs.

Catholic Home Care's Telehealth Program increases communication between patients, caregivers and clinicians. Telehealth keeps physicians better informed about patient progress and also educates patients to better understand and self-manage their health and wellness. It is just one of the ways Catholic Home Care is evolving to better meet patient needs in the home.

Donor support helps enable Catholic Home Care to perform the essential work of visiting and communicating with increasing numbers of patients, whether on site in the home or through expanding Telehealth services. If you would like to make a contribution of any size to support this work, please visit the [Catholic Home Care giving page](https://www.catholichomecare.org/giving). If you think home care services could benefit you or a loved one please contact (631) 465-6830.

You are invited to participate in the daily Mass and other spiritual programming on the Catholic Faith Network (CFN), the national television network based here in our own Diocese. A complete programming schedule is available at www.CFNtv.org. Many parishes are also offering video streamed Masses and other devotions online. Check your parish web site for availability.

Our prayer for you this week is that the risen Lord will watch over all of us during these challenging times and protect the clinicians and support staff of Catholic Home Care as they care for their patients. If you are able, I implore you to support Catholic Home Care and your parish with your prayers and with your philanthropic gifts. Please know that you and your family are remembered in my daily prayers and Masses.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend John O. Barres
Bishop of Rockville Centre