

Faithfully Serving in 100 Locations Across 21 Virginia Counties and 7 Cities!



Catholic Charities clients include Afghan refugees with Special Immigrant Visas. With your support, we welcome them into their new home.

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## Catholic Charities Welcomes Incoming Afghans

BY ZOEY MARIAIST AND STAFF | A longer version of this story appeared in *The Arlington Catholic Herald*. Reprinted with permission.

**WHEN U.S. SERVICE MEMBERS** were in a foreign land, unsure of the way and unable to speak the language, brave locals came to their assistance. Now, the Afghans who served as interpreters and guides for the U.S. military need help adjusting to a new country.

For decades, the U.S. military has been in Afghanistan and finally withdrew troops. The Taliban, an extremist Islamic movement that ruled Afghanistan until ousted by a U.S.-led coalition, has taken advantage of the withdrawal to regain control in the region, making it especially dangerous for those who assisted U.S. forces.

Operation Allies Refuge, which began July 30, brought planeloads of Afghans to Dulles International Airport, then to

Fort Lee, near Petersburg, Va. The families were pre-vetted and able to complete the immigration process safely stateside.

As the crisis in Afghanistan unfolded, the number of SIV holders served by Catholic Charities has dramatically increased, with more than 200 SIV- holders coming for assistance in the last 8 weeks alone. Catholic Charities has resettled 368 SIV holders – most of whom are from Afghanistan – this fiscal year to date.

Six diocesan Catholic Charities staffers worked with the new arrivals at Fort Lee, including Hekmatullah Latifi, who came to the United States with his wife and children on a special immigrant visa in 2016. In Afghanistan, Latifi worked for the U.S. Embassy and U.S. Agency for International

Development. When he felt his family was being threatened, he decided to bring them to the United States.

Usually, the Special Immigrant Visa application process is completed in Afghanistan. But because of the country's volatile

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### How to help

- **Afghan SIV Arrival Help:**  
[cdda.net/give-help/welcome-the-newcomer/afghan-response-flyer.pdf](http://cdda.net/give-help/welcome-the-newcomer/afghan-response-flyer.pdf)
- **Donate critical needs through the Amazon Wish List:**  
[cdda.net/refugeewishlist](http://cdda.net/refugeewishlist)
- **Schedule a parish drive for personal hygiene kits:**  
[cdda.net/MRCdonate](http://cdda.net/MRCdonate)

## President's Message

Dear Friends of Catholic Charities,

I was recently asked by a national correspondent why we had a crucifix and pictures of our Holy Father and our Bishop displayed in our Newcomer Services office, given that many of the people we have resettled here in our diocese are not Catholic.

I shared with him that our ministry of hospitality is about *our* faith, not theirs. Later, I reflected that the crucifix reminds that one day we will all answer for how we fed the hungry, or clothed the naked, or welcomed the stranger. The image of Pope Francis reminds us of his words that our Church has no borders and that we “must not fail to respond” to the plight of immigrants and refugees. And the picture of our Bishop reminds us that our response must be carried out here and now, in the Diocese of Arlington.

Since 1974, with your generous support, Catholic Charities, has been welcoming newcomers from all over the world to our diocese. We are grateful to put our faith into action. We can do this because thousands of you have volunteered over the years to serve as mentors, teachers, and prayer-warriors. You have given your time, talent, and treasure to ensure that we are not indifferent to the plight of our brothers and sisters who arrive with almost nothing but the clothes on their backs.

Newcomers bring their stories, their resilience, and their determination to succeed. It is the American story, re-created each day. It is a story intimately connected to our own experience as Catholics in America. We remember what it was like to flee famine, persecution, and deprivation in search of a better life for our children, and our children's children.

Thank you for your continued prayers, especially for the people of Afghanistan, and for those who have been forced to leave their homes, and their homeland. And please pray for us at Catholic Charities, that we may continue to carry out our ministry of welcome with compassion and humility.

Gratefully yours in Christ,



**STEPHEN CARATTINI**  
*President and CEO*  
Catholic Charities of the  
Diocese of Arlington

“Where can we buy enough  
*food for them to eat?*”

John 6:4

This past year, thanks to your generosity, Catholic Charities' St. Lucy Food Project bought a new super-sized delivery truck. Thinking it would be more than sufficient, it was brought to a parish for its Blue Bag Drive, which began at 9 a.m. But by noon, the truck was already full. There just wasn't enough room for all the food that was collected that day!

The St. Lucy Food Project provides for families in need throughout our diocese. And in parish after parish, we've seen record amounts of food continue to be collected. Thank you for sharing your resources so that others may eat.

I'm reminded of a story about Blessed Fr. Solanus Casey, a Capuchin friar in Detroit, who was in charge of the soup kitchen. One day, a hundred men showed up to eat, hoping to have lunch. But on that particular day, there was no food available. So Fr. Solanus gathered them to pray the Our Father: *Give us this day our daily bread.* A delivery truck then unexpectedly pulled up. After unloading the food, the driver looked at it and said, “All of that couldn't have fit in my truck!!!” Indeed, there was more food available than was possible to fit inside the vehicle.

This miracle of sharing takes place when we give in a poverty of spirit and rely on God. If we each give what little we think we have, in the end – together – we will have more than enough.

Thanks to you, Catholic Charities needs bigger trucks!

Love and blessings,



**FATHER ROBERT CILINSKI**  
*Episcopal Vicar for*  
Charitable Works

situation, immigrants needed to leave the country quickly.

“I had to wait two years in a normal situation in Afghanistan to get processed,” said Latifi. “But (at Fort Lee), the whole chain of people who are involved in this process were on the same floor, in the same building sitting in each room. It’s a very expedited system. In my life I haven’t seen such a great welcoming event for refugees (of) such a large scope.”

“It’s a (horrible) situation for everyone right now,” he said. “For those directly involved in the U.S. mission in Afghanistan,

some people told me they locked themselves down in their homes, they were not going outside, they were not letting their kids go outside because they thought they might be targeted.”

Latifi said he felt proud to help the newcomers. “Those families were picked up from the middle of a fire and brought to safety. It’s so emotional, so touching,” he said. “Every single family was thankful for the services they received, for the warm welcoming they received.”

“Some of the incoming families will settle within the Arlington Diocese and many

have connections with friends or family in the area,” said Jessica Estrada, director of newcomer services for Catholic Charities. For up to five years after their arrival, Catholic Charities will help them enroll their children in school, get health care, and find employment and a place to live.

Stephen Carattini, president and CEO of Catholic Charities, is grateful his team was able to pitch in. “Our ministry is to serve the poor, protect the vulnerable and welcome the newcomer,” he said. “These are folks who helped our government in good faith and now we have an opportunity to return that favor.” †

## Mental Health Counseling: “Invisible Losses” from the Pandemic



### *Dealing with the issues of COVID*

“We have to recognize that we have all lost something,” says Dr. Michael Horne, director of clinical services for Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington. He spoke on the Diocese’s *Searching for More* podcast, discussing what he called “invisible losses” during the time of COVID.

Mental health counseling is provided by Catholic Charities’ Family Services ministry. The counselors who perform these services combine the Catholic faith with a solid understanding of the human person, ultimately helping us to say yes to what God asks of us in our lives.

Dr. Horne notes how the pandemic impacts not just those who get sick,

but even those who don’t personally know anyone who died.

All of us experience losses during COVID restrictions: perhaps we can’t attend a friend’s wedding or have birthday parties for our children. Maybe we had holidays alone, without family. These “invisible losses” can weigh on us, making it difficult for us to remain positive.

Dr. Horne points to denial as a major obstacle to healing. We may want to deny or downplay our loss, since we think we’ll be able to avoid pain that way. But denial only makes it worse. He likens it to taking care of a bodily injury: if we get a broken leg and keep running, it’ll lead to more problems.

Dr. Horne shares ways to cope with loss in a healthy way:

- Admit that you’re sad or angry because you couldn’t be with loved ones. Being sad is not a sign of weakness. After all, even Our Lord wept!
- Instead of isolating yourself, reach out to others, especially those who share and understand your sorrow.

- Help others. There is something encouraging in being able to show Christ’s love to someone.

- If you’re sad over missing a special experience, we should find alternate opportunities for joy.

- Incorporate prayer, finding strength and consolation in the Faith. Suffering can even be a source of growth, in being united with Christ on the cross.

Not everyone needs intensive counseling. But how do we know when to seek out help? Dr. Horne suggests that we should pay attention to changes in our prevailing mood or level of interest in activities that we typically enjoy, especially if these start to affect other areas of our lives.

And it’s unhelpful to compare ourselves to others in worse situations, to think that we have no right to grieve. Instead, it’s important to process these losses in order to move forward and heal.

Find the Diocese’s “Searching for More” podcast on your favorite digital distribution platform, including iTunes, Spotify, Google Play, and Stitcher.

Find *Searching for More* at [arlingtondiocese.org/searching-for-more-podcast/](http://arlingtondiocese.org/searching-for-more-podcast/)

## Children Helping Children



Vacation Bible School campers at St. Thomas More Cathedral School.

**C**HILDREN AT TWO DIOCESAN parishes learned how to model the compassion of Jesus by collecting and packing food for other children who are hungry. **The Cathedral of St. Thomas More in Arlington and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Lake Ridge** teamed up with Catholic Charities St. Lucy Food Project to collect food during their summer Vacation Bible Schools (VBS). Together, children from both parishes collected close to 900 pounds of food geared toward children's lunches or child-friendly meals.

"We wanted to incorporate some kind of active service project for the kids at VBS," said Christine Kurtzke

Hughes, the Cathedral's director of advancement. "While they're learning about Jesus and his compassion, why not include something that involved the parish and taught a valuable lesson to the kids about caring for one another?"

Cathedral parishioners donated almost 400 pounds of convenient ready-to-eat food which VBS campers packed into 150 meal packs. The St. Lucy Food Project sent the lunch packs to the Knights of Columbus Council #7771 of Front Royal, who distributed them to children in need of food.

"We know that hunger doesn't stop in the summer, especially for school-age children who rely on the meals they

receive at school to augment – and sometimes even replace – meals they get at home," said Hughes. The VBS campers "learned not just a real-life example of living the Beatitudes, but also that there are children their age who are hungry and are not as fortunate as they."

A similar effort that focused on food for hungry children took place at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton where Sheri Sues, director of faith formation, teased VBS attendees with daily food clues. With the help of their parents, the kids collected St. Lucy's most-needed foods: canned tomatoes and sauce, macaroni and cheese, jams and jellies, and baked beans. More than 460 pounds was stacked into food pyramids before being taken to the St. Lucy warehouse in Manassas where it will be distributed throughout the 21 counties Catholic Charities serves. We're so grateful to all VBS families and parishioners for helping us feed neighbors in need. †



VBS campers collected and organized food.



## The Baker Tilly Team at St. Lucy's

Baker Tilly team members sorted and packed non-perishable food for hungry neighbors at the St. Lucy Food Warehouse in Manassas during their Stewardship Week.



For corporate service opportunities, please contact the Office of Volunteers at [volunteer@ccda.net](mailto:volunteer@ccda.net) or visit [volunteer.ccda.net](http://volunteer.ccda.net)

# New Ultrasound Machine Will Benefit High-Risk Pregnant Women at Manassas Clinic

BY CECILIA ENGBERT | A longer version of this story appeared in *The Arlington Catholic Herald*. Reprinted with permission.

**BISHOP MICHAEL F. BURBIDGE** blessed a new, high-tech ultrasound machine at the Manassas Mother of Mercy Free Medical Clinic on July 20. The \$32,000 machine was donated primarily by the Knights of Columbus Fr. Julius J. Cilinski Council 10947 in Clifton.

Alexandra Luevano, program director at the clinic, said the new machine takes higher-quality images and works faster than the old machine it replaced, allowing the clinic to serve high-risk patients more effectively.

“A lot of our patients are high risk and require growth scans frequently,” Luevano said. “Instead of sending them somewhere else where they would have to pay to get these growth scans, they’re able to have those scans done here at the clinic.”

Many of the patients at the clinic have gestational diabetes, while some are at risk from high blood pressure, age or previous pregnancy loss.

“This machine will continue to allow us to see pregnant women (who) are in need of more extensive services that would cost significant amounts of money if we were to send them anywhere else,” Luevano said. The new equipment will help the clinic expand previously unavailable services.

Dr. Rachel Home, a volunteer obstetrician and radiologist at the Manassas clinic, is able to do high-quality scans and take measurements on the new machine, which was recommended by a maternal fetal medicine specialist, with the click of a button.



Bishop Burbidge blesses the new ultrasound machine at the Manassas Mother of Mercy Free Medical Clinic on July 20.

“This machine will continue to allow us to see pregnant women (who) are in need of more extensive services that would cost significant amounts of money if we were to send them anywhere else.”

— ALEXANDRA LUEVANO, PROGRAM DIRECTOR

“I’m very thankful to have this machine,” Home said. “It’s very helpful for me in terms of managing my patients.”

The Knights of Columbus approached the clinic in March 2020 to provide this gift. After research and overcoming issues with the pandemic, the clinic was able to accept it in May 2021.

“We feel extremely blessed to have the support of the Knights of Columbus of all of Northern Virginia, because they have just gone above and beyond to

support our ministry and the patients that really need it,” Luevano said. “It’s wonderful to be able to work with such a great organization.”

In the 2021 fiscal year, the Manassas and Woodbridge clinics saw 1,465 clients, offered 9,719 appointments and provided care with the help of 11,489 volunteer hours.

An earlier ultrasound machine, which the Knights gave to the clinic in 2019, will be sent to the Mother of Mercy clinic in Woodbridge. †

## DONOR SPOTLIGHT: ANONYMOUS



*“Do Not Let Your Left Hand Know What Your Right Hand is Doing.”*

### 1. How did you become aware of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington?

Catholic Charities is something most people hear and know. The outreach of the Diocese of Arlington chapter allowed us to understand what Catholic Charities actually does and how they are funded.

Details matter to us. We don't want to give to fake charities, and understanding the details of the money and the programs is important.

### 2. What motivated your decision to support our ministries?

We have given small amounts to Catholic Charities in the past, but the thing that pushed us to provide a larger donation was that Catholic Charities had a staff member talk at our parish on a Sunday. She spoke right to our hearts – within minutes of leaving church, my family decided this was going to be our major contribution for the year.

### 3. What role does your Faith play in your decision to support Catholic Charities?

Faith is the only reason we give to Catholic Charities! We are very blessed, and it is our responsibility to share the blessings we received with others in Christ's name!

### 4. Why have you chosen to remain anonymous for this interview?

Frankly, our philosophy takes the following reading seriously: *But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.* (Matthew 6:3-4) †



To donate online,  
please visit [ccda.net/donate](https://ccda.net/donate)

## Catholic Charities Future Needs

**It's easy to name Catholic Charities as a beneficiary of a retirement plan, brokerage account or life insurance policy.**

For instructions, view our website [ccda.net](https://ccda.net) or contact Gretchen Koch at (703) 841-3819 or [gretchen.koch@arlingtondiocese.org](mailto:gretchen.koch@arlingtondiocese.org).

SAVE *the* DATE

GIVING  
TUESDAY

NOVEMBER 30, 2021

Make your gift at [ccda.net/donate](https://ccda.net/donate)

## Meet Martha Mellor



*“The seniors are so full of happiness, life and energy, I always feel that I get so much more than what I give to them.”*

– MARTHA MELLOR, VOLUNTEER

### 1. Tell me about your background.

I am originally from Panama. Growing up I was always involved in the Church. As a military spouse, I have lived in many different parts of the U.S. and overseas. Volunteering with Catholic Charities and other organizations has been my way to get involved with the community.

### 2. What do you do in your role as a volunteer for Catholic Charities?

I am the Lead Volunteer for the Crafting Crew at St. Martin de Porres Senior Center. We gather every Thursday morning to create beautiful crafts with the seniors. The crafts are used to decorate the Center, and to take home for their houses or as a present to friends and family members. Every week they have a new craft to look forward to making. I am not a crafter myself, but I try to find new ideas and projects for our classes. It is great to watch the participants learn new techniques for making crafts, and then come up with things that I never thought of doing.

I also help with birthday and holiday parties, serving lunch, assisting during field trips, and interacting with the seniors who share their stories about their lives and experiences.

### 3. How and when did you get involved with St. Martin de Porres Senior Center?

My daughter Maria started volunteering at the Senior Center in 2015. She always told me how much she enjoyed volunteering there and how she thought I would enjoy it too. I started to volunteer with her.

### 4. What do you find most rewarding?

The most rewarding thing about volunteering is being around the Seniors, listening and learning from them, and sharing good times with them. The participants have so much wisdom to share with everyone, they are so talented, caring, friendly and strong. They are so full of happiness, life and energy, I always feel that I get so much more than what I give to them. They are a blessing for all of us. Their generation is one that I admire so much because of how strong and determined they are – they amaze me all the time. It is so rewarding to be around them.

### 5. What is the experience of working through the pandemic like?

It was very sad when the participants at the Senior Center lost the opportunity to interact with each other every day. They love the Senior Center, and for many of them this is their second home and their family. They enjoy seeing their friends and participating in the activities. But St. Martin de Porres did not abandon the seniors. On the contrary, we continued caring for them with phone calls, newsletters, drive thru events, and online events like exercise classes, bingo, trivia, and presentations. I was happy to volunteer in anything I could. The activities that the Senior Center has provided over the last year and a half have been the only social interaction that many of the seniors have. They are extremely grateful for the outreach.

### 6. Do you have any interesting stories about your experience?

One senior there speaks a language that no one else in the Center speaks.

At the beginning she was reluctant to participate because she was not sure she was going to be able to follow the craft class. But we invited her to join the classes anyway, and the rest is history! She doesn't miss a class, and she is so happy all the time. She has even given advice and ideas to other participants, despite the language barrier. She is so amazing!

At the Senior Center I find that sometimes a good conversation can influence my life. I have received some of the best advice from members of the St. Martin de Porres Senior Center. Their wisdom is a treasure!

### 7. Is there anything else you'd like people to know?

The St. Martin de Porres Senior Center is an important part in the life of the members. It gives them the independence and social interaction that they like. It helps them keep their body and mind active. The love that they give and receive fill their days with joy and thanksgiving.

Come join the many volunteers that help make all of this possible – it only can happen if they have volunteers. †



## Call for Volunteers!

To learn more about our volunteer opportunities and ways you can get involved, please visit [volunteer.cdda.net](http://volunteer.cdda.net) or email Debra Beard at [debra.beard@cdda.net](mailto:debra.beard@cdda.net).



## Mark Your Calendar for These Upcoming Events!

Nov. 14, 2021	World Day of the Poor
Nov. 30, 2021	Giving Tuesday
Dec. 11-12, 2021	Parish Christmas Collection
Feb. 11, 2022	Catholic Charities Ball



## Workplace Giving

Every day, Catholic Charities brings transformational services, delivered with compassion, to meet the needs of every person who seeks our help, regardless of background, belief, or circumstance.

You can be a part of this transformation by making a pledge to Catholic Charities during this CFC campaign season.

**Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington's CFC number is #24770**

The CFC also allows:

- You to pledge volunteer hours to help Catholic Charities serve tens of thousands of clients each year; and
- Federal retirees to make a recurring donation by deduction from their annuity.

Please remember to check "YES" to share your pledge information so we can keep you updated on the impact of your gift.

**Thank you for your generous support of our work.**

## Christmas Collection

**When?** December 11 & 12, 2021

**Where?** Your parish

**Why?** To share the healing love of Jesus Christ with those whom we are blessed to encounter each day. **This collection accounts for 10% of all money raised by Catholic Charities.** All donations stay in the diocese!



## ABOUT CATHOLIC CHARITIES, DIOCESE OF ARLINGTON

*Together, We're Transforming Lives!*

21 programs across 21 Virginia counties and 7 cities

Serves all regardless of background, faith, or circumstance

85 cents of every dollar spent goes to programs and services



200 N. Glebe Road, Suite 250  
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## Join Our Online Community



[ccda.net](http://ccda.net)

Our Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) number is 24770.