



“I came that they might have life and have it more abundantly.”

John 10:10



**VITALity**  
Catholic Healthcare Services

A HEALTHCARE MINISTRY OF THE DIOCESE OF CAMDEN



# 2020 Annual Report



2020 has certainly proven to be most challenging in so many ways for all our diocesan ministries. Not the least of these was VITALity Catholic Healthcare Services. However the staff of dedicated professionals met this challenge head-on and came up with innovative and unique ways to assist those in need with their healthcare issues and concerns. Using computer technology and other socially distanced forms of communication, VITALity reached out, through these troubled times of uncertainty and fear sparked by the COVID-19 pandemic, to many with healthcare information, care coordination, and assistance.

In addition, our beloved seniors, many of whom are blessed by the fellowship of community within their parishes, are subjected to the pain of isolation due to the pandemic. Again, through the marvels of ZOOM, VITALity has arranged for many of them to be virtually connected which can help to combat the effects of depression and fear throughout these times of social isolation.

Overall, this was a year of challenge, precautions, fear and sadness in loss of life. In this 2020 Annual Report you will read how through these struggling times the efforts of VITALity, through innovation, ingenuity, assurance and dedication to its mission, brought peace of mind and joy into the lives of many of our frail elderly and their families. I remain forever grateful for their efforts and I thank you, our faithful parishioners throughout the Camden Diocese, for your continued support of VITALity through your generosity to the House of Charity/Bishop's Annual Appeal.

Sincerely in Christ,



Most Reverend Dennis J. Sullivan, D.D.  
Bishop of Camden



Having now completed our fifth year of operations serving the healthcare concerns of the people of South Jersey, we at VITALity are pleased to present this 2020 Annual Report to the faithful of the Diocese of Camden.

Certainly 2020 has been a unique year, filled with the challenges, sorrows and restrictive measures of the COVID-19 pandemic. Through it all, our staff has remained focused on the needs of so many of our elderly and disabled brothers and sisters. Focused on those most vulnerable to the debilitating and deadly effects of COVID-19, we helped them to receive the care and attention they needed to endure and survive these times physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually.

Our hospital chaplains have often remained the sole connection to patients' faith as they struggled with illness in the hospital. Certainly hampered by visitation restrictions, our chaplains used creative ways to pray with and remain the healing hands and hopeful face of Christ to our hospitalized brothers and sisters, many at the end-stages of their lives due to COVID-19.

All of our parish-based ministries, Parish Nursing, Stephen Ministry, and our Senior Centers and Programs, were severely restricted in their work due to the limits on social gathering and social distancing. Yet, through the technology of ZOOM and other computer-based communications, they remained in touch and in

connection with those parishioners in need of social interaction, pertinent health information and the comfort of compassionate words of support to help them through their struggles in life.

In the pages of this 2020 Annual Report, you will see our stories of outreach and connection with so many to bring joy, peace and well-being into their lives through these times of fear, sorrow, frustration and isolation.

Thank you for your interest in VITALity Catholic Healthcare Services and for your generous support of our ministry of caring for those most vulnerable in our region. Please continue to pray for our success as we strive to bring the reality of Christ's love to those we serve through these difficult times and into the future. A future that we are confident will be filled once again with the loving embraces of those we cherish and for whom we care.

Peace and all good things,



Deacon Jerry Jablonowski  
Executive Director  
VITALity Catholic Healthcare Services  
Diocese of Camden

VITALity nurses and social workers give hope to seniors and persons with disabilities who are seeking essential services to enable them to live in health and safety in their home or to assist in a transition to another setting if needed.



VITALity's Care Coordinators provide much more than information and resources. They help individuals and families discover what resources are available and what questions to ask, understand program eligibility, navigate complex applications as well as explore next steps for planning future healthcare needs.

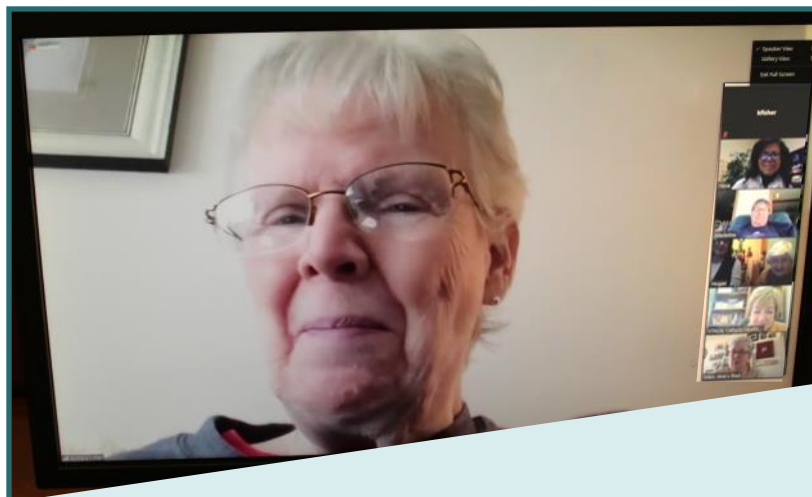
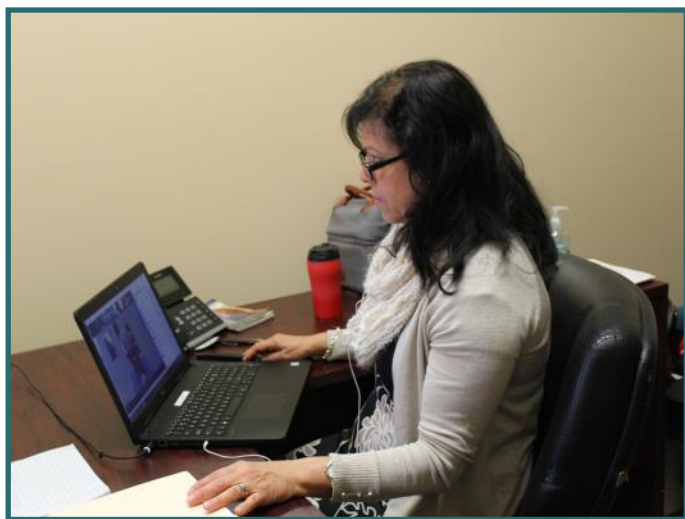
One simple call to our caring Resource and Referral Help Line (1-888-26-VITALity) offers individuals and their loved ones valuable information about available resources and connects them to our care coordinators for more comprehensive assistance.

During 2020, VITALity staff received over 1,000 calls from individuals and families seeking assistance.

Even though challenged by the pandemic during 2020, 2,690 encounters (a 39% increase over last year), were completed providing guidance and access to needed services. Operations during the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated additional phone and computer-based consultations to meet the clients' needs and keep them safe.

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In the 5 years since the inception of VITALity, our Care Coordinators have served over 4300 individuals, helping them to remain as independent and healthy as possible, as they struggle through the trials of aging and infirmity.



## VITALity Catholic Healthcare Services MISSION STATEMENT

We serve to enhance the quality and promote the dignity of life for the elderly, persons with disabilities and their families throughout the Diocese of Camden through programs and services that address the health and well-being of body, mind and spirit. Rooted in our Catholic values, we deliver these services freely and compassionately as the Gospel directs us, and we will care for and assist all people in need, regardless of their religious affiliation.

### Top 10 Services

Over 2,000 of these Services Arranged

1. Insurance
2. Home Health Aides
3. Nutritional Services/Meals on Wheels
4. Housing
5. Catholic Charities Assistance
6. Counseling
7. Prescription Assistance
8. Coordination with hospital staff for follow-up
9. Medical Equipment
10. Medical Home Care Services

Hospital Chaplaincy provides pastoral care to Catholic patients at 18 hospitals and healthcare facilities throughout our diocese. The pastoral care team for each hospital consists of a priest with a deacon, a woman religious and/or a lay minister. Their ministry includes the priest administering the Sacrament of the Sick and Sacrament of Penance, while all pastoral care visits offer Holy Communion, prayers and spiritual resources to patients and their families.

In addition, 235 Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion support the chaplains in their pastoral care. This year has presented many challenges to providing direct in-room pastoral care due to the strict visitation protocols.

### Annual Spiritual Report

Pastoral care encounters with patients .....	61,559
Pastoral care visits with staff and families .....	4,869
Holy Communions .....	16,720
Sacrament of the Sick .....	2,456
Baptisms celebrated .....	4
Hospitals/ Facilities .....	18
Priest Chaplains and associates .....	19
Extraordinary Ministers of Communion .....	235

Here are some of the creative ways that our chaplaincy team has been ministering to patients during these challenging times:

- Using hospital approved personal protective equipment
- Standing outside the door of the patients' room and praying with them
- Using Facetime or video calls with the assistance of the hospital staff
- Telephone consults for the staff, families and loved ones
- Providing the hospitals with about 1000 prayer bags to be given to patients. (In each bag: a rosary, a spiritual communion prayer card, a miraculous medal and other prayers appropriate for the present time)
- In the two long-term care facilities entrusted to the care of the chaplaincy program, the chaplains have provided to all the residents hundreds of personal greeting cards, birthday gift bags and Christmas greeting cards prepared by the religious education students from the local parishes.



The goal of this ministry is to create an environment of acceptance and inclusion in parish communities for all those with special needs and their families. Through Masses of Welcome and Inclusion, respect for the individual and appreciation for their unique gifts and talents is encouraged so they can participate fully in the faith life of the Church. VITALity supports parishes in offering adaptive catechesis so that all those seeking to receive the Sacraments can be accommodated and welcomed into the family of the Church. This ministry also works to advocate for and acquire the appropriate services and resources families need to support their loved ones with disabilities to live as independently as possible when they age out of the educational system into early adulthood. The work of VITALity also provides opportunities to socialize and gather, allowing for further interaction, acceptance and respect of all members within our Church community.

Nurses and other healthcare volunteers throughout the Diocese of Camden continue to answer the call to be a health awareness and healing presence in the parish community. Providing health education, advocacy and a healing presence to parish communities are at the core of the parish nurse ministry. This year more than ever, providing education has been at the forefront of the parish nurse ministry. Providing resources and a healthcare presence has been a major area of focus for the ministry as pastors and church leaders navigate safely reopening and maintaining parish communities.

Parish nurse ministries continue to touch the lives of approximately 1,000 parishioners each month. Working to perform temperature screenings before Mass, support to pastors and parish leaders as they work to implement diocesan changes and provide education on proper mask wearing and handwashing techniques have been some of the efforts with which parish nurses have assisted. They also collaborated with pastors and other parish-based ministries as needed and provided updates regarding health conditions. Parish nurses also coordinated blood drives in some local parishes to collect necessary blood products to help hospitals respond to the increased needs of patients.

The Foundations of Faith Community Nursing course was moved to a virtual course this year. Eighteen participants with varying backgrounds in nursing furthered their nursing education by attending the course. The course continues to be the only foundations course in the state of New Jersey and this fall's class was the largest group the Diocese of Camden has ever hosted. Parish nurses are blessed to have scholarship support to help them attend this course as well as continued annual grant support from VITALity Catholic Healthcare Services.



### Testimonial

*“This past summer my husband became gravely ill and was air-lifted to the hospital. Since the world was in the middle of a pandemic, I couldn’t be with him. Parish Nursing volunteers at my parish learned about my husband and reached out the very next day to help me. What truly got my children and me through it all was the spiritual support the parish nurses gave. They checked in on my family every day. We would have been lost without them! They were truly a gift from God.”*



**Parish Senior Day Centers**

Parish-based Senior Social Day Ministries provide our older adult community a place to gather together with local friends to share fellowship. The senior day centers encourage healthy living, independence and social and spiritual activities. They offer a wide variety of daily menus and free activities including: continental breakfast and a nutritious lunch, exercise programs, holiday celebrations, socialization, spiritual enrichment, intergenerational activities and informative presentations supporting healthy lifestyles. Seniors are vital members of each parish community and it is essential that they stay engaged and active in the parish community. Parish-based senior social day ministries allow members to remain independent and connected with their parish community. To date, over 200 seniors maintain membership within the 3 centers in our diocese.

During the COVID pandemic, our parish-based senior ministries were restricted from any indoor activities. Feelings of loneliness and isolation have affected our aging population more than ever. The parishes found creative ways to keep members engaged. For example, many had weekly virtual gatherings on Zoom to socialize, attend spiritual retreats and participate in healthy lifestyle presentations. Many held outdoor activities that took place in the parish parking areas such as, “Car-b-ques”, chair exercises, outdoor games and karaoke. The results are life-changing and empowers them to live “Life to the Fullest.”



**Senior Day Centers**

- The Renaissance Center Senior Ministry**  
St. Andrew the Apostle  
Gibbsboro
- Prime Timers Senior Ministry**  
Church of the Incarnation  
Mantua
- Golden Slippers Senior Ministry**  
St. Simon Stock Parish  
Berlin

**Our Journey of Hope Ministry**

There is a significant need in our community to care for people affected by cancer and their families. Receiving support and hope is vital to one’s health, well-being and recovery. To help those affected by cancer, VITALity Catholic Healthcare Services has teamed up with Cancer Treatment Centers of America to train volunteers to lead these ministries. This training equips ministry leaders with the knowledge to form a parish-based cancer ministry to support their parishioners and community members. Today the Diocese of Camden has eight parishes providing practical help, support and hope to the community. The COVID-19 pandemic limited cancer care volunteers from entering homes with community members undergoing cancer treatments. This has been challenging, but we have found other ways to help. Our volunteers have dropped off care packages, sent cards and encouraging words of hope, made phone calls, used Facetime and virtual calls in order to stay connected and to support them during their treatments and recovery.

**Building Awareness**

VITALity Presentations & Gatherings  
 ..... 19 in person, 20 virtual  
 Lives Encountered in above Presentations & Health Fairs  
 ..... 3500



**Mercy Teams**

In order to remain healthy and independent VITALity supports and offers training sessions to compassionate and caring parish volunteers who wish to give their time to provide in-home help services to support the elderly and those recovering from a medical condition. This compassionate outreach ministry helps a person with services such as preparing a meal, providing a ride or giving practical help in their home. The services provided are “home-help services,” not “home-health services.” This act of mercy by the volunteers makes a difference in allowing the person to remain safe, independent and in the comforts of their own home. The coronavirus pandemic has suspended many in-person and home services. During the pandemic, our parish volunteers have shopped for others, prepared meals, and made phone calls to the homebound or sent cards or letters of encouragement. Today we have 11 parish Mercy Teams throughout the Diocese of Camden.

**Life to the Fullest  
Membership Program**

Stay informed and connected by enrolling in VITALity’s “Life to the Fullest” health and well-being membership program. This program is free and available to all South Jersey residents age 65 and over. As a member, you will receive our quarterly newsletter with upcoming diocesan events, health topics and information about VITALity programs. This program allows you to request free literature about health topics, spiritual enrichment and healthy lifestyle information.

VITALity staff present informational sessions to members throughout the year. The challenges we faced with the coronavirus pandemic made it vital to stay connected with the parish community. Our senior population advanced their skills in technology and participated in the virtual presentations with great ease. This year VITALity launched our first webinar series, “The Effects of the Coronavirus on Health and Well-Being” for our “Life to the Fullest” members.



**“Life to the Fullest”  
Enrollment - 2100**

When life brings trials and tribulations, most people feel the need to share that difficulty with someone whom they trust and who would keep their confidence. Stephen Ministry provides that safe and confidential space, through their pastoral and spiritual care by ministering to those who need to share their burdens; whether it is a divorce, grief, terminal illness, loss of job, hospitalization, loneliness and isolation during this pandemic, being a caregiver to a loved one or any other stresses and challenges, Stephen Ministers are there to help.

Stephen Ministry is a lay ministry based on the idea that all Christians are called to and gifted to minister to others. They offer compassionate and caring listening by ministering to members of our parishes and our communities. Stephen Ministers are each assigned a care receiver and they meet weekly for about an hour, as long as the care receiver needs it.



Since the pandemic, face to face interactions with family and friends and other opportunities for personal interaction have been greatly restricted and diminished leading to social isolation. Therefore, the requests for Stephen Ministry care continue.

During this challenging time of the pandemic, Stephen Ministers found new and creative ways to connect and care for their care receivers through phone calls, text messages or emails and sending cards when appropriate. And many ministers have also been providing care through Facetime, Zoom and other platforms.

In the midst of all these challenges, we have also been able to start the first bilingual Stephen Ministry program at Divine Mercy Parish in Vineland and the first one in Cumberland County. Stephen Ministry indeed is a gift to our parishes.

**Stephen Ministry at a Glance**

<i>Stephen Ministry Parishes</i> .....	16
<i>Trained Stephen Leaders</i> .....	36
<i>Trained Stephen Ministers</i> .....	322
<i>Care Receivers</i> .....	200+

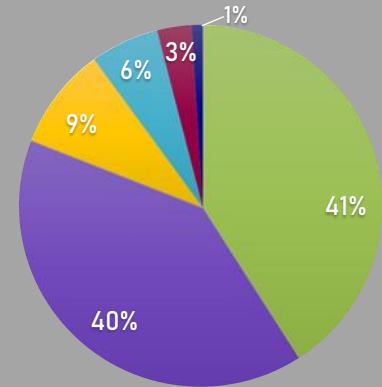
***Testimony from a care receiver***

*“It is amazing how lending a listening ear can have such a big impact in someone’s life. I was paired with someone that understood my situation as she herself went through similar circumstances in her life, . . . I am thankful for the times we have met, the experience, and the wisdom shared with me as it has made me feel less alone in the personal battles that life has thrown my way.”*

# VITALity Financial Stewardship

Stewardship of the financial resources we are privileged to receive is of high priority within our ministry. Realizing the cost of services and the amount of human capital that goes into these services, VITALity develops programs that both meet the needs of those we serve in South Jersey and stay within the cost limits established through our appropriations from the Diocese of Camden Healthcare Foundation, Inc. and the House of Charity-Bishop's Annual Appeal.

Below is a graphic representation of how these funds are distributed within our various ministries for the current fiscal year:



## VITALITY ANNUAL BUDGET FUNDING SOURCES

House of Charity/Bishop's Annual Appeal .....	\$843,202
Diocese of Camden Healthcare Foundation.....	\$1,348,159
Grant Subsidy through Diocesan Housing Services .....	\$158,950
<b>Total VITALity Annual Funding .....</b>	<b>\$2,350,311</b>

■ Hospital Chaplaincy .....	41%
■ Care Coordination /Help Line .....	40%
■ Parish Senior Programs/Day Centers .....	9%
■ Parish Nursing.....	6%
■ Ministry With Deaf/Disabilities .....	3%
■ Stephen Ministry .....	1%
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>100%</b>

If you would like to be part of this valuable effort, your contribution would be greatly appreciated. Your online donation through our website or check payable to: "VITALity Catholic Healthcare Services/Diocese of Camden" will enable us to continue our work and touch the lives of even more people here in South Jersey that find hope and comfort from the charitable works of VITALity/Diocese of Camden. (Mail to: 631 Market Street, Camden, New Jersey 08102.) Thank you for your support.

## MISSION STATEMENT

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## WE WHO SERVE . . .

**Deacon Jerry J. Jablonowski, MS, PT**  
Executive Director  
VITALity Catholic Healthcare Services

**Reverend Sanjai Devis, VC**  
Director  
Hospital Chaplaincy and Stephen Ministry

**Mimi Schaible, RN, MSN, MBA**  
Director, Care Coordination and Consultation

**Nicole Keefer, RN**  
Director, Parish Nursing

**Reverend Hugh J. Bradley**  
Director  
Ministry with the Deaf and Persons with Disabilities

**Anne Marie Pirillo**  
Manager, Parish Based Senior Programs

**Karen Fisher, MS**  
Executive Assistant

**Natasha Sauls**  
Call Center Coordinator

**Sister Mary Rose Mroz, SCC, MA**  
Administrative Support/Call Center Operator

**Betsy Roberts, MSW**  
Care Coordinator

**Rita Lyman-Sicilia, RN**  
Care Coordinator

**Rosemary Love, RN**  
Care Coordinator

**Christine Vattimo, RN**  
Care Coordinator

**Patricia Williams, RN**  
Care Coordinator

**Maureen E. Mahon, RN**  
Wellness Nurse-Senior Housing Services

**Bobbie Bradley, RN**  
Care Coordinator/Wellness Nurse-  
Senior Housing Services

Chaplains  
**Reverend Naveen Borlakunta, VC**  
**Reverend Monsignor Dominic J. Bottino**  
**Reverend Glenn R. Hartman**  
**Reverend Jerold C. Mariastanislaus**  
**Reverend John Perdue, MSSC**  
**Reverend Robert B. Matysik**  
**Reverend John Wasilewski**

Associate Chaplains  
**Honora Marie Burke**  
**Sister Margaret M. Conboy, SSJ**  
**Nancy Beth DiSeveria**  
**Deacon Robert Dooley**  
**Deacon Joseph Janocha**  
**Sister M. Mieczyslawa Koczera, LSIC**  
**Sister Christina Ma, MSBT**  
**Anthony Poekert**  
**Deacon Arnaldo Santos**  
**William J. Wisely**