

Column091221

Companions on the Journey

September 12, 2021

Dear Friends in Christ,

When I was a youngster I remember hearing about tornados and how they always seemed to happen out in Kansas or Nebraska or Oklahoma. I wondered why we never experienced them around here. I remember being told that tornados tend to happen more frequently where the terrain is very flat and this area is hilly and even mountainous in places (think Poconos). That made sense to me and as long as we didn't get tornados I was good. But now we seem to be making up for lost time. Tornados are becoming part of our life here in the Mid-Atlantic region of the country. We now are beginning to know the painful reality up close and personal.

I spent much of Tuesday on the phone with a variety of parishioners whose homes were damaged, rendered uninhabitable or even destroyed by the tornado of last Wednesday. And this on top of a year and a half of the pandemic where we were beginning to sense a light at the end of the tunnel we experience another flare-up of covid-19 as the delta variation grows more contagious even though it is not so deadly. We are back over a hundred thousand new cases daily again. And now we experience the frightening devastation of the remnants of Hurricane Ida and five tornados in Pennsylvania.

My friends, let us continue to pray for all those—moms and dads, children and grandparents, single people, young and old who have been negatively impacted by any of this or all of this. Prayer is always that one weapon we have access to which can still give us hope. What can we do?

Besides prayer, Saint Anthony's is going to participate with an effort that has been proposed and spearheaded by Upper Dublin Lutheran Church. Elsewhere in the bulletin you will see a list of items still needed to help people and where they can be dropped off. Saint Anthony's is opening an account at Ambler Savings for Hurricane Ida Tornado Relief. You can send any donation to us. Make the check payable to Saint Anthony of Padua parish. In the Memo line indicate Hurricane Ida Relief.

It is not yet clear to those individuals and families that have been negatively impacted what exactly they do need. And by when. Some insurances will cover the damage. Others will not. I spoke with older widows and young moms with little kids and every one in between. We will collect money. Monitor the situation. Then dispense the funds. We considered a GoFundMe account but we already are designated as a charitable organization with a tax exempt number and used to the process of collecting funds and forwarding them or dispersing them. It is a large part of what we do. So we will use our ordinary channels to collect and distribute these funds. In addition, we will have a second collection this Sunday September 12.

We also putting together a list of those in our school, day care, parish who will be needing assistance. In advance I thank you all for your generosity at this time.

In the peace of Christ,

Msgr. McHenry