



Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel
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March 11, 2018

This week our neighborhood endured a second deadly fire. Two people died and, as of the time of my writing, two are still in critical condition. Others have been hospitalized and released. In all, at least fifteen families have been displaced, including members of our parish, adults and children alike. This fire did not get the same national media coverage as the fire on Prospect, but the families affected are suffering just as much. Our parish has been coordinating with our elected officials and Catholic Charities of New York to respond quickly to the needs of these families. We have visited all of the hospitalized and are working to contact and offer help to the displaced. We know that the first few days after the fire, the families are scattered, either in temporary shelters offered by Red Cross or with family members. But soon these families will need to get back on their feet, find new apartments, and deal with the financial consequences of not being able to go to work.

Instead of doing another food and clothing drive, as a parish we will be collecting gift cards and pre-paid debit cards that can be given to the families for immediate use. I would encourage all of us to think how we can help. These cards can be purchased at most drugstores and also on-line. You can drop the cards off at the parish office or put them in the collection basket next week. Next weekend we will take up a second collection for these families. In this collection you can either offer these gift cards (our preference) or cash. I will make sure all of this goes to the families most in need.

When one member of a family is hurt, the whole family suffers with them. This week members of our parish and neighborhood families were hurt. We now come together in solidarity with them and do what we can to alleviate their pain. Above all, we offer them our love and our prayers.

God bless,
Fr. Jonathan