**Diocese of Rochester**

**Public Policy Advocacy Weekend February 13/14, 2021**

Advocacy Issue: ***NOURISH NEW YORK***

* **BULLETIN EDUCATION**

#1 (January 24)

**PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCACY WEEKEND February 13/14, 2021**

**Advocacy Issue: Funding for *NOURISH NEW YORK* initiative**

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit everyone hard. In particular, the pandemic has focused a spotlight on two vulnerable groups in New York State: farmers and our neighbors who are food insecure – many are newly hungry due to job losses caused by the pandemic. The Diocesan Public Policy Committee invites us to join in **helping both** on Diocesan Public Policy Advocacy Weekend (February 13/14) by calling on state leaders to allocate $50 million to continue the NOURISH NEW YORK initiative during state fiscal year 2021-2022.

#2 (January 31)

**PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCACY WEEKEND February 13/14, 2021**

**Advocacy Issue: Funding for *NOURISH NEW YORK* initiative**

***NOURISH NEW YORK*** is a New York State initiative that provides funding to Food Banks to purchase New York State-produced farm products. This accomplishes two goals: it offers market support to farmers, the fishing community, and food processors who have been impacted by the economic effects of the pandemic, while getting high-quality food to individuals and families across the state through the regional Food Banks to local parish and community food pantries. The initiative provided $35 million in funding from May 1 to December 31, 2020. 4,152 farms have provided over 17million pounds of high-quality New York-produced food to New Yorkers in-need.

#3 (February 7)

**PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCACY WEEKEND February 13/14, 2021**

**Advocacy Issue: Funding for *NOURISH NEW YORK* initiative**

The NOURISH NEW YORK initiative ended December 31, 2020. It is imperative that this effective program, created to alleviate the impact of the pandemic, continue. Therefore, we call on New York State leaders to provide $50 million for state fiscal year 2021-2022 to make NOURISH NEW YORK an ongoing program to respond to the need for hunger relief and farm survival across New York State.

#4 (February 13/14)

**PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCACY WEEKEND February 13/14, 2021**

**Advocacy Message: Funding for *NOURISH NEW YORK* initiative**

Please join in speaking up for the vulnerable today. Please consider signing this message.

Cut it out of the printed bulletin or print it from the online bulletin on our parish website.

Drop your signed message in the box/basket at church or mail it to the Governor.

Honorable Andrew Cuomo

Governor of New York State

Executive Chamber – State Capitol Building

Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

***NOURISH NEW YORK*** initiative has been an effective and creative response to the impact of the pandemic on New Yorkers, providing a lifeline for food-insecure families (many newly-insecure because of job losses due to COVID-19) and for struggling farmers, the fishing community and food processors across the state.

**We call on state leaders to allocate $50 million for fiscal year 2021-2022 to make *NOURISH NEW YORK* an ongoing program to respond to the need for hunger relief and survival of farms, fisheries, food processors in New York State.**

Respectfully yours,

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(signature) (print name)

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(address/zip)

* **PULPIT ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**FEBRUARY 7**

Next weekend our parish will participate in the annual Diocese of Rochester Public Policy Advocacy Weekend. Postcards will be available for you to sign with our message to state leaders to adequately fund the NOURISH NEW YORK initiative to continue to alleviate the impact of the pandemic. See the bulletin for more detail on NOURISH NEW YORK.

**February 13/14**

This weekend we are participating in our Diocese of Rochester Public Policy Advocacy Weekend. Please consider signing a postcard available on the tables in church. Drop it in the box provided. Thank you for caring about food-insecure families in our community and the survival of farms and other food producers in New York State.

* **OPTIONAL PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL**

Your love surrounds us, O Lord, in this time of pandemic and uncertainty; may we hear your call to love and compassion for vulnerable brothers and sisters…..we pray to the Lord.

Keep us safe, O Lord, not only from physical illness, but also from apathy and self-concern…we pray to the Lord.

That we may never take for granted Your gifts of life, breath, health, food, freedom…..we pray to the Lord.

Open our eyes to Your divine image in all peoples and give us the strength to follow you more faithfully…..we pray to the Lord.

**TIPS/SUGGESTIONS/INFORMATION**

* If possible, please put copies of the advocacy postcard out in church along with a marked box into which parishioners can drop their signed postcards. If permissible, place pens, hand sanitizer/alcohol wipes on the tables with the postcards.
* Please collect the postcards by February 28 and arrange with the Justice & Peace staff at your county Catholic Charities office for pick up or mail (see below for contact information).
* Please, also consider posting the advocacy message on your parish website with an appeal to parishioners to print the message, sign it and mail it to the Governor (or drop it in the box at church).
* The Diocesan Office of Evangelization and Catechesis is partnering with the Diocesan Public Policy Committee and Catholic Charities to promote parish/parishioner participation in the 2021 Diocese of Rochester Public Policy Weekend. They developed a series of beautiful social media messages and will send them to parishes. We are also including them with this packet of resources. Please encourage your parish to use them.
* View a video on NOURISH NEW YORK initiative: www.agriculture.ny.gov/NourishNY

**Justice & Peace Ministry Staff - Catholic Charities**

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