



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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CONTACT: Matt Knee, Executive Director

PHONE: 850-501-3476

EMAIL: [kneem@cc.ptdiocese.org](mailto:kneem@cc.ptdiocese.org)

Florida Blue Foundation

CONTACT: Toni Woods

PHONE: 904-891-3304

EMAIL: [toni.woods@floridablue.com](mailto:toni.woods@floridablue.com)

**CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF NORTHWEST FLORIDA RECEIVES FOOD SECURITY GRANT  
AWARD FROM THE FLORIDA BLUE FOUNDATION**

*Florida Blue's 2020 Food Security Grant Program will help expand Catholic Charities' mobile food pantry outreach to rural areas, provide affordable healthy food across its 18-county service area, and offer awareness and education about other food assistance opportunities.*

**PENSACOLA, FL** – Catholic Charities of Northwest Florida Regional Food Assistance Program (CCNWFL) has been awarded a \$400,000 grant by the Florida Blue Foundation through its Food Security Grant Program. The funds will be disbursed over a four-year period from 2021-2024 in payments of \$100,000 per year. The grant award will be used across the agency's 18-county Northwest Florida and Big Bend service area with a goal to impact food security for families and communities by helping to mitigate associated costly issues, which can be detrimental to health, development, and well-being.

Catholic Charities' "Neighbors Helping Neighbors Across Northwest Florida" Food Security Grant will establish the CCNWFL mobile food pantry program out of Panama City which will provide food assistance to rural food deserts in the surrounding areas. It will increase access to and availability of healthy, nutritious food from the five food groups across its three regional food pantries based in Tallahassee, Fort Walton Beach, and Panama City, as well as two mobile food pantries. It will also offer the opportunity to provide an increased awareness about enrolling for benefits in the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP).

“Through this grant, we will be able to provide nutritional education using a holistic approach to care for the whole person with our collaborative community partners,” said Matt Knee, Executive Director of CCNWFL. “We believe that feeding individuals who are hungry is more than just providing food. It’s a chance to give them a strong footing toward future food security.”

Florida Blue Foundation offers the Food Security Grant Program as a way of making a positive impact in the community and is firmly rooted in the company’s mission to help people and communities achieve better health.

“As a mission-driven company, we want to address critical issues such as food security in the communities we serve,” said Daniel Vermette, Florida Blue Market Leader for Northwest Florida. “Supporting Catholic Charities’ local and mobile food pantries allow us to bring these neighborhoods the help they need, where they need it. Having enough nutritious food is the first step to healthy living.”

#### **About Catholic Charities of Northwest Florida**

Catholic Charities of Northwest Florida is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit social service organization that provides food and emergency assistance, adoption and immigration services, disaster relief, and shelter for the homeless across an 18-county Northwest Florida and Big Bend service area. Ninety percent of those served are not of the Catholic faith and are assisted regardless of race, religion, or ethnic background. For more information about Catholic Charities of Northwest Florida, please visit [ccnwfl.org](http://ccnwfl.org). You can follow Catholic Charities of Northwest Florida on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

#### **About Florida Blue Foundation**

Florida Blue Foundation enables healthy communities by making grants, building coalitions and rewarding best practices. More than three million people in Florida have received direct health services as a result of grants made to nonprofit organizations since our founding in 2001. Florida Blue Foundation is a trade name of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida Foundation, Inc., an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. For more information about the Foundation, please visit [www.FloridaBlueFoundation.com](http://www.FloridaBlueFoundation.com).

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