



# 2020 Bishop's Annual Appeal

## Notes from Bishop Cary



### **What's different between Bishop's Annual Appeal and the Parish Assessment?**

Simply stated, the Assessment is a fixed parish expense which goes to support the fixed expenses of the Diocese. Throughout the world, parish support for the essential costs of the Bishop's ministry is one of the fixed costs of running a parish. Just as the parish budget makes provision for paying parish phone bills, heat bills, and light bills, so its monthly line item for the Parish Assessment helps pay the phone bills, heat bills, and light bills in the Bishop's Office. (The size of each parish's assessment is derived from its annual income.)

### **The Bishop's Annual Appeal is different.**

I ask you—parishioners in every parish—to contribute directly to diocesan ministries that individual parishes cannot sustain on their own. But your direct contribution to the Bishop's Appeal comes back to you as an indirect contribution to your parish as well. For with your support the diocesan ministry of the Bishop enters into parish life and enhances it with a multitude of Appeal-funded programs: diocesan-wide youth retreats; diocesan training workshops for parish catechists, youth leaders, and administrators; diocesan-subsidized on-line resources like Formed.org available free of charge to every parish household. And there are many other similar efforts that redound to the good of the parish.

Here in the Diocese of Baker we Catholics are few and far between. Spread out over the fifth largest diocese in the lower 48 states, we make up the third or fourth smallest Catholic population in the country. As I can happily testify, the faith is very much alive in our rural parishes; but in many of them the economy is not. Our circumstances have changed from 100 years ago, but we are still considered a missionary diocese: we depend on the charity of Catholics throughout the country to help us keep growing in faith.

I remember the Extension calendar in our house in Prineville sixty years ago. Now as then the Diocese of Baker relies heavily on Catholic Extension and Catholic Home Missions (a subcommittee of the Conference of Bishops) to fund parish programs we cannot afford on our own.



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As fundraising and the overall grant environment continues to change, we must look for our own sources of revenue to strive to be ultimately self-sufficient as a diocese. In 2019 only 11% of our basic operating income came from different grant sources. That amount is still about 43% of what we brought in through the Annual Appeal which made up roughly 26% of our operational revenue. (Parish assessments constitute 31% of operations and the remaining third was made up of other miscellaneous sources of income.)

That's why the target for the Appeal keeps rising each year. Throughout the country many other dioceses depend on Catholic Extension as we do, and a number of them are much poorer than the Diocese of Baker. This means that whatever Extension grants us to fund projects here will not go to meet even more pressing needs elsewhere.

So while we should be all the more grateful for the generous donations which Extension and Home Missions continue to channel our way, it would be good to reduce our dependence on them. The more we become able to meet the needs of the Diocese ourselves from within the Diocese, the more we free up resources from outside Baker Diocese for grants to our fellow Catholics elsewhere who need them even more than we do.

**Bishop Liam Cary**