



Diocese of Worcester
Office of the Bishop
49 Elm Street
Worcester, Massachusetts 01609

August 6, 2020

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

As baptized Christians, we are called to care for our brothers and sisters in need. This personal mission of each disciple of Jesus Christ is also reflected in the mission of the Church, including our parishes and our diocese. We are reminded daily of our mission to serve one another just as the world has been challenged to protect and preserve human life in the face of this Coronavirus.

In our own diocese, we are responding to people in need, in large part, through the 25 agencies and ministries supported by Partners in Charity. Donors who make a pledge or gift recognize that they, too, are responders by enabling others to do this work, whether specialized during this crisis, or simply made more poignant due to the pandemic. Consider for example,

- A special **COVID team of 20 priests** has been assembled and trained by the **Office for Divine Worship** to be available to give the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick to those critically ill with the virus across our diocese.
- A team representing various ministries including **Worship, Communications, Catholic Schools and Fiscal Affairs** developed COVID Response procedures to keep our parishes and schools up-to-date and informed regularly about the ever-changing realities of COVID – from following health guidelines to re-opening for public liturgies including funerals for our deceased loved ones
- **Catholic Charities** and **Pernet Family Health Service** responded to families facing hunger or other needs. Catholic Charities also continued its programs in Worcester and Leominster with recovery programs for men and women dealing with substance abuse, as well as shelter services for homeless families.
- The **Development Office** and the **Fiscal Affairs Office** have been offering ongoing guidance to parishes and schools and assisted in accessing PPP loans through the CARES Act.
- **Religious Education, Youth and Young Adult Ministry and Marriage and Family** all adapted their programs for online support to keep people engaged, informed, and on track with sacramental preparation.
- **TV Ministry** expanded programming when churches were closed and continues to bring the Sunday Mass in English and Spanish as well as Daily Masses to homebound and quarantined parishioners via cable TV and the internet.

These ministries, and so much more, are made possible thanks to the thousands of annual donors to Partners in Charity. If you are one of the 11,025 donors who have made a pledge or gift toward the 2020 appeal, please accept my sincere thanks.

If you have NOT yet made a pledge or gift, now is the time. With only a few weeks left, we need your help. I cannot imagine what it would have been like these past few months if these

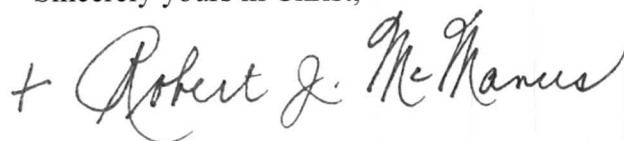
agencies and ministries had not been able to respond. *This crisis isn't over.* We need every gift to assure that we can continue to respond after September 1 when our new fiscal year begins.

As Christians, we give out of gratitude to God so that we can be witnesses of God's love to others in need. In last Sunday's Gospel, Jesus challenged his disciples to share their five loaves and two fish in order to feed thousands of people. As Christian stewards, when we share our treasure in thanksgiving we too can respond to the needs of others in miraculous ways for, with God's help, all things are possible. Whether you make a pledge or gift of \$50 or \$5,000, today is your chance to offer relief to those in need. Please use the attached card or go online to partners-charity.net and be counted as a Partner in Charity.

Please be assured of my prayers for your health and safety and that of all your loved ones during these challenging months to come.

With every prayerful best wish, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert J. McManus". The signature is written in black ink and is preceded by a small cross symbol.

Most Reverend Robert J. McManus
Bishop of Worcester