

Annual appeal supports Catholic life

By Bishop Matthew H. Clark

Each year at this time I invite you to participate in our Thanks Giving Appeal. You should already have received a letter from me encouraging you to do so. With this letter you should have received a brochure featuring stories that illustrate the good things your kind gifts accomplish.

And during our appeal's parish phase you will be finding inserts in your parish bulletin that, I hope, provide information and stories that will give you a deeper sense of the range of services and ministries supported by your donation.

I won't repeat those stories here, but I do ask you to take a moment to familiarize yourself with them. And I invite you, when you have had a chance to do that, to consider a gift in support of this year's effort. I can promise you that we will honor your gift by using it with care and responsibility.

It might be helpful to you if I remind you that your gift helps us in three fundamental ways:

- 1.) Your gift helps us to maintain a healthy, solid network of ministries and services that would be beyond the capacity of individual parish communities but provide valuable resources for all of our parish communities as needed. I mean such services and ministries as catechetical and liturgical training, personnel services, educational resources, leadership training, computer training, insurance programs and the like.
- 2.) Your gift helps us to serve our sisters



A LONG THE WAY

and brothers in need through the delivery of a wide range of human services and through advocacy on behalf of the poor and the fragile, the addicted and the forgotten. In addition to your gifts of more than \$650,000, our leaders in Catholic Charities are able to generate nearly \$16,000,000 in grants, goods and services that directly benefit those in need.

3.) Your gift helps us to fulfill the basic responsibilities that are ours simply because we are a diocese in the Roman Catholic Church. It helps to fund the ministry of the bishop, to carry on proper financial accounting and record keeping. It also funds our participation in the New York State Catholic Conference, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and our capacity to relate appropriately with the several administrative components of the Holy See.

It should be clear from the three general categories listed above that among the good things your gift to the TGA allows us to do, some are more visible than others. That is true, I think, of all organizations of significant size. But while some of the good things your gift makes possible are less visible or less exciting than others, they are all important to our capacity to know, to celebrate and to give witness to Christ's saving presence and activity among us.

This year we hope for an especially strong response to the TGA so that we can be of as much assistance as possible to our parish communities as they continue to implement our Synod priorities at the local level.

I do ask you once again to accept your fair share in meeting our common responsibilities by considering a gift to this year's Thanks Giving Appeal. In doing so you will serve Catholic life throughout our 12 counties. Your gift will do much to sustain Catholic life, to help us all grow in our faith, to serve those in need. And your gift will lighten the burden of others who participate in the TGA.

Thank you very much for your kind attention to these words. I believe in the TGA as a bishop who has the responsibility to call the community together to meet our common responsibility. I believe in the TGA as a donor who has opportunities every day to see the good things accomplished because we join together in this way.

Peace to all.

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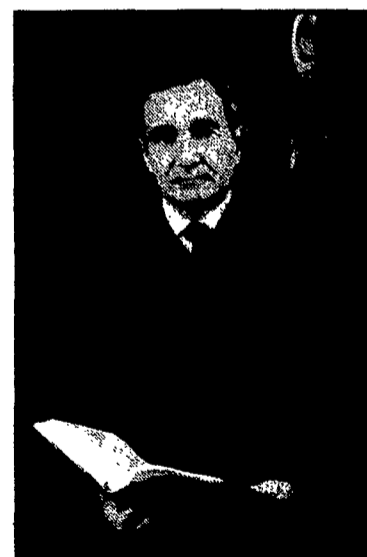
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