**Bishop’s Appeal 2014 Pastor’s Bulletin Messages**

Bishop’s Appeal Kick-off Weekend, Feb 8-9, 2014

**Let it Shine!**

*“You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp then put it under a bushel basket, it is set on a lampstand where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.”* *Matthew 5:14-16*

Dear Friends,

We are blessed to have wonderful religious educators here at <your parish name>. They *Share the Light of Christ* with our young people every week! Our educators light a fire in the hearts of our children so they might know and love Jesus, and they glorify the heavenly Father with the gifts they share with our children.

Thanks in part to the Bishop’s Appeal, our educators receive training and quality curriculum. Through these programs we engage our youth on their faith journey, so that they too might let their light shine for all to see, sharing the love of Christ.

Let your light shine! Your gift to the Bishop’s Appeal helps Catholic Education take place here at <your parish name>. Please prayerfully consider a gift to the Bishop’s Appeal, and join me in Sharing the Light of Christ! To make a gift contact our parish office, use the letter and pledge you received at home or visit the Bishop’s Appeal website at [www.catholicfoundationgb.org/give](http://www.catholicfoundationgb.org/give).

Bishop’s Appeal 2nd Weekend, Feb 15-16

**Commandments and Choices**

*“If you choose you can keep the commandments, they will save you;
if you trust in God, you too shall live; he has set before you fire and water
to whichever you choose, stretch forth your hand.” Sirach 15:15-16*

Dear Friends,

In todays’ readings, we heard much about following God’s commandments. Life is full of choices…as human beings we don’t always make the best choices. We are human. We fall down. We make mistakes. Sometimes we pick ourselves up, other times it is harder to move on. Sometimes we forgive, other times we can’t. Sometimes, we just need help to figure things out.

Maybe you know somebody who needs help working through a problem. Catholic Charities is a great place to refer people, it’s hard to believe all the amazing counseling services they provide. They offer a light to people in darkness. Mental health issues, poverty, debt management, bankruptcy, drug or gambling addiction, pregnancy, adoption and parenting support, family conflict…Catholic Charities helps people resolve problems and choose to make better choices.

Your gift to the Bishop’s Appeal makes a tremendous difference to Catholic Charities. They are in a position to change, or even save people’s lives. To make a gift contact our parish office, use the letter and pledge you received at home or visit the Bishop’s Appeal website at [www.catholicfoundationgb.org/give](http://www.catholicfoundationgb.org/give).

Bishop’s Appeal 3rd Weekend, Feb 22-23

**You Shall Love Your Neighbor As Yourself**

*“When someone strikes you on your right cheek, turn the other one as well.*

*If anyone wants to go to law with you over your tunic, hand over your cloak as well.
Should anyone press you into service for one mile, go for two miles.
Give to the one who asks of you, and do not turn your back on one who wants to borrow.”*

 *Matthew 5:39-42*

Dear Friends,

In today’s readings we are reminded that we should not only love our neighbor, but also to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us. This feels like a tall order, doesn’t it? It is usually easy to give love to those we know, but more challenging to reach out and show love and compassion to a stranger or to our enemies. Maybe those are people who have made choices we disagree with or have hurt us.

To be perfect in the eyes of our heavenly Father, we need to look past those we know, to be more compassionate with those we might not normally consider. We need to go the extra mile. Certainly there are different ways to do this, but one way is by giving to the Bishop’s Appeal. Funds raised during the Bishop’s Appeal help people in our parish we know, and people in our Diocese that we don’t know. Children and adults attend lively programs learning the Word of God, Care Ministers are trained to minister to members in our parish, Catholic Charities provides counseling to people in need, families seeking to adopt are connected with newborn babies. Your gift to the Bishop’s Appeal makes happy endings possible, and helps you show love and compassion to others.

What you give is less important than the spirit in which you give. To make a gift contact our parish office, use the letter and pledge you received at home or visit the Bishop’s Appeal website at [www.catholicfoundationgb.org/give](http://www.catholicfoundationgb.org/give).

Bishop’s Appeal 4th Weekend, March 1-2

**Version 1 (Parishes with trained Care Ministers)**

**Reaching Out To The Lonely**

*Zion said, “The LORD has forsaken me; my LORD has forgotten me.”
Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child of her womb?
Even should she forget, I will never forget you. Isaiah 49:14-15*

Dear Friends,

Do you know someone who feels forgotten or lonely? I think everybody encounters times of emptiness in their lives, at different times for different reasons. Did you know we have volunteers here in our parish who reach out to fellow parishioners in times of need? Lay pastoral care ministers respond to the spiritual and emotional needs of the bereaved, hospitalized, terminally ill, separated, divorced, unemployed, or those facing some personal crisis.

Becoming a Care Minister requires educational programming, training, support and guidance. Your support of the Bishop’s Appeal enables members in our parish to be trained as Care Ministers, and allows those hurting in our parish to receive pastoral care.

Maybe you know somebody who needs assistance in our parish? Maybe you’re interested in becoming a Care Minister! Contact <care ministry coordinator name> if you need more information about Care Ministry here at <your parish name>. If you are inspired to support this ministry, please consider a gift to the Bishop’s Appeal. Contact our office, or visit the Bishop’s Appeal website at [www.catholicfoundationgb.org/give](http://www.catholicfoundationgb.org/give).

**Version 2 (Parishes without tained Care Ministers)**

**Reaching Out To The Lonely**

*Zion said, “The LORD has forsaken me; my LORD has forgotten me.”
Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child of her womb?
Even should she forget, I will never forget you. Isaiah 49:14-15*

Dear Friends,

Do you know someone who feels forgotten or lonely? I think everybody encounters times of emptiness in their lives, at different times for different reasons. Did you know our parish has people who reach out to fellow parishioners in times of need? They respond to the spiritual and emotional needs of the bereaved, hospitalized, terminally ill, separated, divorced, unemployed, or those facing some personal crisis.

One of biggest blessings I receive is knowing I am able to help someone through a troubling time in their life. God has called me to priesthood to serve and care for his people. Each year, the diocese provides training for me and many other people to be able to reach out and be the face of Christ to those in need.

If you are having a tough time, please let us know at the parish. I would like to encourage everyone to consider helping in two ways. The first is to join me in praying for those suffering in today’s world, and the second is to give a gift to the Bishop’s Appeal so more people can be trained to serve individuals struggling.

What you give is less important than the spirit in which you give. To make a gift contact our parish office, use the letter and pledge you received at home or visit the Bishop’s Appeal website at [www.catholicfoundationgb.org/give](http://www.catholicfoundationgb.org/give).