**Bishop’s Appeal 2017**

**Pastor’s Bulletin Message**

**Feb 5 Week 1 Kickoff & Catholic Charities**

**Inspire Disciples**

 *“Thus says the LORD: Share your bread with the hungry, shelter the oppressed and the homeless;…do not turn your back on your own. …if you bestow your bread on the hungry and satisfy the afflicted; then light shall rise for you in the darkness, and the gloom shall become for you like midday.”*

*Isaiah 58:7-10*

Dear Friends,

By reaching out to those in need, as the Lord tells us to do in the first reading, we too can feel the light and warmth of God in our hearts. It is important to set the example and inspire disciples to do the same. The troubled need our love and support now more than ever.

Maybe you know somebody who needs help working through a problem. Catholic Charities is a great place to refer people. The counseling services available through Catholic Charities provide people in darkness the inspiration they need to turn things around. Mental health issues, poverty, debt management, bankruptcy, drug or gambling addiction, family conflict, pregnancy, adoption and parenting support are all ways Catholic Charities helps people resolve problems and directs them on a path to a better life.

Your gift to the Bishop’s Appeal makes a tremendous difference to those served by 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).

**Feb 12 Week 2 Religious Education**

**Trust in God**

*“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.”*

*SIR 15:15-20*

Dear Friends,

According to the first reading, when we follow God’s commandments we will achieve eternal and everlasting life. At a young age our children are taught right from wrong through the Ten Commandments. Life is full of choices. As human beings we sometimes make the wrong choice. Through our mistakes and through God’s forgiveness, we learn, grow and become closer to God.

We are blessed to have devoted religious educators in our parish who inspire and encourage our young people. They are disciples who share the commandments and enlighten our children so they might know and love Jesus. Our religious educators glorify the heavenly Father with the gifts they share with our youth.

Through the Bishop’s Appeal our religious educators receive training and quality materials. These programs engage our youth on their faith journey, so they too are inspired to follow the commandments, share the love of Christ and become disciples.

You too can inspire disciples! Your gift to the Bishop’s Appeal helps Religious Education take place here at <your parish name>. Please prayerfully consider a gift to the Bishop’s Appeal, and join me in inspiring disciples! To make a gift contact our parish office, use the letter and pledge card you received at home or visit the Bishop’s Appeal website at [www.catholicfoundationgb.org/give](http://www.catholicfoundationgb.org/give).

Thank you and all our religious educators for sharing the word of God with our youth.

**Feb 19 Week 3 Pastoral Care**

**Love Your Neighbor**

*“The LORD said to Moses, "Speak to the whole Israelite community and tell them: Be holy, for I, the LORD, your God, am holy. …You shall love your neighbor as yourself...” LV 19:1-2, 17-18*

Dear Friends,

It is not always easy to reach out to complete strangers. God encourages us to love our neighbors as ourselves. It is important to strengthen our communities with the love and support we would give our own families.

We have many faithful volunteers in our diocese who reach out to fellow parishioners in times of need. Care Ministers respond to the spiritual and emotional needs of those in our community.

Becoming a Care Minister requires 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.

If you know somebody who needs assistance in our parish or if you’re interested in becoming a Care Minister please contact <care ministry coordinator name> for more information about Care Ministry here at <your parish name>.

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 consider a gift to the Bishop’s Appeal so more people can be trained to serve individuals struggling. Contact our office, or visit the Bishop’s Appeal website at [www.catholicfoundationgb.org/give](http://www.catholicfoundationgb.org/give).

**Feb 26 Week 4 Leadership Training (Version #1 –Emmaus Ministry in Parish)**

**Inspirational Leaders**

*"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink,
or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?*

*… Your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides. Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself.” Matthew 6:24-34*

Today’s Gospel teaches us how to address the worry in our everyday lives. The Gospel tells us to first seek God and all things will be given to us. By being closer to God we can feel a sense of peace, love, and harmony in our lives instead of worry and concern.

There are many leaders in our diocese who teach us how to grow closer to God. The Emmaus ministry provides leadership training and formation for Youth Ministers, Religious Educators, Business Managers, Pastoral Liturgical Ministers and Care Ministers.

[Our Parish] has been blessed to have [#of people who have completed the program] members who have been inspired to grow deeper in their faith and through the Emmaus ministry. These people now serve the people of [Parish Name]. Our parish has benefitted greatly from their service and the training they received. This training was funded through the Bishop’s Appeal.

The Emmaus Program gives our leaders the opportunity to gain the knowledge and skills to be effective ministers. Our ministers grow in human, intellectual, spiritual and pastoral ministry. The program offers courses, workshops, seminars, retreats, review sessions and spiritual direction.

Inspire and support our ministers and their efforts to bring us all closer to God by giving 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).

**Feb 26 Week 4 Leadership Training (Version #2 Leadership Training in Diocese)**

**Inspirational Leaders**

*"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink,
or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?*

*… Your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides. Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself.” Matthew 6:24-34*

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