**2020 Bishop’s Appeal Pastor’s Bulletin Messages**

Bishop’s Appeal Kick-off Weekend, February 1-2, 2020

***Rising in Faith* – 2020 Bishop’s Appeal**

*“Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in sight of all the peoples, and glory for your people Israel.” Luke 2:29-32*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In today’s Gospel, we hear how the Holy Spirit revealed to Simeon he would not see death before he had seen Christ. Because of his faith, Simeon immediately recognized Jesus the child when his parents brought him into the temple. *Rising in Faith* may we, too, recognize the presence of Jesus in our lives and share Him with others.

One easy way we can rise in faith and share Jesus is by supporting the 2020 Bishop’s Appeal. There are many families and individuals in need of hope and healing in our parishes and communities. Your gift to the Bishop’s Appeal helps bring Jesus to people in need. Through the many social service ministries of Catholic Charities, those struggling with addictions, mental health issues and financial worries receive counseling and tools to improve their lives.

In our Catholic schools and faith formation programs, children discover Jesus and the great love He has for them. You help children rise in faith. Your gift also funds the training for Care Ministers to share prayer and Holy Communion with parishioners who are in hospitals, care facilities or homebound. You help keep parishioners connected to their faith.

Please prayerfully consider making your gift to the 2020 Bishop’s Appeal. Together, *Rising in Faith*, now is our opportunity to share the love of Jesus and our Catholic mission. Visit the parish office or Bishop’s Appeal website at www.catholicfoundationgb.org/give to make your gift today! Thank you for your support of the Bishop’s Appeal and <<Parish Name>>.

**Week 2 – February 8-9, 2020**

**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 faith formation educators here at <<Parish Name>>. They help our young people rise in faith every week! Our educators light a fire in the hearts of our children so they might know and love Jesus and they glorify our 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.

*Rising in Faith* let your light shine! Your gift to the Bishop’s Appeal helps Catholic Education take place here at <<Parish Name>>. Please prayerfully consider a gift to the Bishop’s Appeal and join me in *Rising in Faith*! 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.

**Week 3 –** **February 15-16, 2020**

**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. Together we can rise in faith and share God’s love and mercy.

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.

**Week 4 – February 22-23, 2020**

**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. Together we need to rise in faith and 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.