



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

January 21, 2012

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The struggle to receive basic pastoral care and catechesis is faced by thousands of faithful living in home mission dioceses. The Catholic Home Missions Appeal, whose theme is "Strengthening the Church at Home," helps ease that struggle through grants that support priestly and religious vocations, faith formation, and education for leaders to attend to the unique needs of their faith communities.

Year after year, this appeal helps diocese that cannot provide basic pastoral services to their people without outside help. For example, last year the Appeal enabled the home mission diocese of Biloxi, Mississippi, to support the expenses of educating 12 seminarians. These future priests will be invaluable, as 11 priests are currently retired, and several more are eligible for retirement in the next few years. A unique aspect of seminarian education in Biloxi is training as a sign language practitioner. One-quarter of the hearing-impaired individuals in the Biloxi region are Catholic. With the help of the Catholic Home Missions Appeal, these and other programs ensure that parishioners here at home can worship well in vibrant faith communities.

A mission diocese must often contend with high rates of poverty and a lack of educated pastoral and lay leadership. With your support, the Catholic Home Missions Appeal can continue to provide essential pastoral outreach in home mission dioceses.

I encourage you to be generous in the Catholic Home Missions Appeal, a special collection to be taken at Lord's Day Masses in late January or early February based on your parish schedule. Your support will truly make a difference. Through your generosity we all share in the evangelizing mission of the Catholic Church.

With every prayerful best wish, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Robert J. McManus
Bishop of Worcester

(Please read or print this letter in the parish bulletin on the weekend prior to the collection. Some envelopes have the weekend of January 29 and some have February 5. Thank you.)