



ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI

Office of the Archbishop

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October 2021

My Dear Friends in Christ,

On November 14, the Universal Church will once again celebrate the World Day of the Poor. In his 2021 message for the occasion, Pope Francis directs us to reflect upon, “The poor you will always have with you” (Mk 14:7). He exclaims:

The face of God revealed by Jesus is that of a Father concerned for and close to the poor. In everything, Jesus teaches that poverty is not the result of fate, but a concrete sign pointing to his presence among us. We do not find him when and where we want, but see him in the lives of the poor, in their sufferings and needs, in the often inhuman conditions in which they are forced to live. As I never tire of repeating, the poor are true evangelizers, for they were the first to be evangelized and called to share in the Lord's joy and his kingdom (cf. Mt 5:3). (no. 2)

The poor are a sacrament of Christ; they represent his person and point to him. (no. 3)

The poor will always be with us, yet that should not make us indifferent, but summon us instead to a mutual sharing of life that does not allow proxies. The poor are not people “outside” our communities, but brothers and sisters whose sufferings we should share, in an effort to alleviate their difficulties and marginalization, restore their lost dignity and ensure their necessary social inclusion. (no. 3)

Pope Francis’ challenge to us is to consider how we can respond to the needs of the poor – through direct charity, yes – but also by finding ways for them to fully participate in society. God has entrusted us, his disciples, with the responsibility for giving hope to the poor.

This is precisely what the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) is all about!

For Catholics in the United States, the weekend of November 20-21 is our annual collection for CCHD, the U.S. bishops’ anti-poverty, gospel justice program. Through the grants we make to well-vetted organizations, CCHD uniquely empowers those in poverty to identify their own needs and to become their own agents of positive change.

RADIATE CHRIST

As a result of your generosity from last year's CCHD Collection, thousands of low-income individuals in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati benefitted from the work of our funded organizations. Among them are hard-to-hire people obtaining jobs and employment skills, youth developing leadership skills, and neighborhood leaders securing decent housing and public services in their communities. In every instance, CCHD was there to hear their cries, to help them find a place at the decision-making tables impacting their lives, and to give them a sense of ownership over their communities.

CCHD is a mandatory collection in the archdiocese, which means that every parish will be taking it up. We send two-thirds of this collection to the national CCHD offices at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (much of which comes back to fund organizations operating in our archdiocese). The remaining one-third is granted to agencies in our own archdiocese through our local CCHD Committee and Social Action Commission. A small portion supports the U.S. bishops' Black and Indian Mission Fund, anti-poverty education efforts in our parishes and schools, and administration of these funds. It is our strict policy that organizations that receive CCHD funds must not participate in activities that promote abortion, same-sex marriage, the death penalty, affronts to human life and dignity, or any positions contrary to fundamental Church teaching.

Pope Francis asks us, *"How can we give a tangible response to the millions of the poor who frequently encounter only indifference, if not resentment? What path of justice must be followed so that social inequalities can be overcome and human dignity, so often trampled upon, can be restored?"* (no. 6) CCHD offers us that path.

Thank you in advance for your donations on CCHD Collection Weekend. You can learn more about CCHD's work in the Archdiocese at <https://resources.catholicacoc.org/offices/catholic-social-action/task-forces-committees/cchd>.

With gratitude for your attentiveness to the cry of the poor, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Most Reverend Dennis M. Schnurr
Archbishop of Cincinnati

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