



THE DIOCESE OF KALAMAZOO

"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes down on you; then you are to be my witnesses even to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:9)

April 2022

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

During our diocesan *Jubilee Year of the Holy Spirit*, I hope that you have been enriched as we collectively pray for the grace to be ever-more receptive to the *power* Jesus promised to send us when He sent the Church His Holy Spirit on that first Pentecost. This is the same *power* we have received through our reception of the sacraments of baptism and confirmation. Through the Holy Spirit's seven-fold gifts, Jesus expresses His hope for us: "*then you are to be My witnesses even to the ends of the earth.*" (Acts 1:9) While there are many ways that we can be Jesus' joyful missionary disciples, one concrete and valuable way that we can help build up God's Kingdom in the nine counties of our Diocese is through your support of the *Bishop's Annual Appeal*. The theme of this year's appeal flows from our Jubilee Year's focus: "*Inspired by the Holy Spirit: Sharing God's Gifts in Love and Service.*" I am incredibly grateful for your generous support which enables our Diocese to 1) foster vocations, 2) strengthen our vibrant parishes, 3) and reach out in charity to those in need.

While all of us share the common vocation received at baptism to *live lives of holiness in union with the Body of Christ*, our Diocese also needs to foster the life vocations to which God calls us, whether that be to priesthood, religious life, or sacramental marriage. Your generous support of the *Bishop's Annual Appeal* provides the specialized education and formation of our diocesan seminarians who, God willing, will one day share their God-given gifts back to us as priests. Our diocesan ministries also provide resources to help couples prepare for, and live, the sacrament of marriage, as well as providing a variety of youth formation and education programs to help them learn, and grow, in our Catholic Faith.

Our diocesan offices also encourage and support our parishes in helping them to be the vibrant "centers of hope" they are called to be. These resources include our annual catechetical conference and our online religious education program, along with extensive online faith formation and enrichment programs available to anyone.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit help to *inspire, encourage, and guide* us in our lives, so that our lives will bear the fruits which are signs of the Holy Spirit's influence. This is most evident in the works of charity and outreach to those in great need. The *Bishop's Annual Appeal* directly supports the life-affirming works of Catholic Charities Diocese of Kalamazoo through: the Bread of Life program providing food for the hungry; Caring Network providing support for young pregnant women and new mothers; the Ark providing a haven for troubled youth; and Baraga Manor providing support for our elderly.

Through our diocesan ministries, programs, and services your generous support of the *Bishop's Annual Appeal* helps the Church in the Diocese of Kalamazoo to use the Holy Spirit's gifts to bear the fruits of the Spirit in many necessary ways. Your gift helps us to fulfill Jesus' hope for us: "*to be My witnesses, even to the ends of the earth.*"

With great gratitude for your support of our diocesan *Bishop's Annual Appeal*, and assuring you of my prayer that the Holy Spirit will continue to pour out His abundant and powerful gifts upon you, your families, and our entire diocese, I remain

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Paul J. Bradley
Bishop of Kalamazoo