



December 11, 2010

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington occupies a special place in my heart as they provide comfort and solace to many people who are suffering. In *Spe Salvi*, our Holy Father presents a clear standard when he writes, “The true measure of humanity is essentially determined in relationship to suffering and to the sufferer. This holds true both for the individual and for society... to accept the “other” who suffers means that I take up his suffering in such a way that it becomes mine also” (Pope Benedict XVI, *Spe Salvi*, no. 38). Catholic Charities gives the faithful the opportunity, individually and as one body, to arise and tend to the needs of the least-fortunate in a manner that is informed by our Catholic faith.

The nature and duty of this call to comfort the afflicted is most serious. The size and diversity of our diocese, coupled with the fact that people of all faiths seek our support, requires the support of our parishes and missions whose members form the faith-filled community. Catholic Charities’ services and programs must extend throughout the diocese, a goal to which I am fully committed. Last year, **Christ House on Wheels**, operating within **Christ House**, delivered thousands of pounds of food to many rural parishes in the diocese. However, there is still much more that we must do for all parts of our diocese where people are suffering and need our support for food, clothing and shelter.

As a witness to Catholic Charities’ faith in action, I know that we are often the last, best hope for those in need of food, shelter, a safe place from emotional or physical abuse and financial assistance. That is why your continued support is vital. On **December 11-12** the annual second collection for Catholic Charities will provide an opportunity for you to care for suffering individuals and families in our community who have nowhere else to turn.

Your support will enable the agency to: operate the Christ House soup kitchen, food pantries for the hungry and shelters for homeless families; provide rent and utilities assistance to the poor; assist the elderly who live alone; offer Catholic mental-health counseling for the troubled; promote life to women in crisis pregnancies, adoption and foster care programs; and aid immigrants and refugees. Your gift during the December 11-12 second collection for Catholic Charities will make a tangible contribution to these programs.

I ask you to be generous with your sacrificial gift this season so that all our brothers and sisters in need may experience Christ’s love made visible through us.

Joining you in this outreach to the least of our brothers and sisters, I remain,

Faithfully in Christ,

+ Paul S. Loverde

Most Reverend Paul S. Loverde
Bishop of Arlington