



August 12, 2011

My Dear Brother Priests:

By its very nature, the desperate situation in Somalia and the eastern parts of Africa calls for our compassion. Many in Somalia are starving, forced to leave their homes and possessions to seek basic necessities for their families. When we encounter this humanitarian crisis, it is natural to be moved by a desire to help our brothers and sisters: to live out the corporal works of mercy.

The Holy Father has encouraged us to respond charitably to the needs of the men, women and children in East Africa. As a diocesan Church, we have the opportunity to support the important efforts of Catholic Relief Services (CRS) which is already hard at work aiding Somalia. Generous contributions would enable CRS to feed thousands and to save lives through the provision of nourishment, clean water and shelter, as well as to develop programs such as drought mitigation.

In response to these critical needs, I ask you to consider facilitating a second collection for the weekend of August 20-21 or August 27-28. While this collection is not mandatory, I encourage you to recognize the tangible difference the contributions from your parish could make to those who suffer. You should send the proceeds from this collection to the Chancery where they will then be sent to Catholic Relief Services. (Please note also that this collection is distinct from the regularly scheduled collection taken recently to aid the Church in Africa).

I thank you in advance for offering your parishioners the opportunity to bring the Lord's charity and generosity to the people in Somalia and East Africa.

Faithfully in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul S. Loverde". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

Most Reverend Paul S. Loverde  
Bishop of Arlington

CC: Parish Secretaries