



DIOCESE OF PORTLAND OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

May 1, 2008

My Dear Friends in Christ,

Pope Benedict XVI has written, "Charity is...a part of the nature of the Church, an indispensable expression of her very being." To help us hear and follow Jesus, the Church provides sacramental, educational, and pastoral care ministries for all our parishes and all our people. Acting with and through Our Lord, we support one another through prayer and good works. This is our mission. This is our service.

It is the need to fund these ministries that drives us to conduct the Bishop's Appeal each year. I invite every Catholic to do his or her part to hand on the faith, to strengthen our programs, and to care for others.

2008 has already brought economic hardship to many in Maine, and may bring more. Some Catholics will be unable to give because they cannot afford the rising costs of food and fuel, just to name two. Catholics have always seen hard times as a call to sacrifice, to share more, not less; so I am counting on those who have the means to step up on behalf of their less fortunate brothers and sisters.

I am sincerely thankful to everyone who does whatever the Lord asks, regardless of the amount. Every gift is important.

Whether your circumstances permit a financial gift or not, we still ask for your prayers. I treasure your prayers— I need them.

Thank you for all you do for the Church. You can be sure you have a place in my heart and in my prayers.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Richard J. Malone
Bishop of Portland