



# DIOCESE OF METUCHEN

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OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

December 16, 2022

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We celebrate the season of Advent to prepare our hearts and minds to focus on Jesus coming to us. Throughout Advent we first prepared for His Second coming, and now we are contemplating His becoming man at the first Christmas. I received a Christmas card adorned with a simple message: "He came not to a throne, but to a manger. He lived not as a king, but as a servant. He chose not a kingdom, but a cross. He gave not just a little, but everything."

Much like Jesus, we as His disciples are called to the role of self-donating servant. We continue to be challenged with the emergency needs that arise from people coming to our parishes for help. Every year we have a special opportunity to replenish these emergency funds through the "*Together in Charity*" collection. This fund is solely used for those who come to our parishes in need of emergency assistance. Our parishes rely, to a great extent, on the "*Together in Charity*" collection.

On the weekend of January 7/8, 2023, or another weekend in January, the annual "*Together in Charity*" collection will be taken up at all Masses. The collection funds our Catholic Charities' Emergency Assistance Program that provides assistance to parishes when individuals and families are faced with urgent financial, housing, or medical needs beyond a parish's capacity to help. Your parish may have been one of those helped by the program, since in the last year, 33 of our parishes turned to Catholic Charities for emergency assistance from this fund. In total, 222 households, consisting of 251 adults and 255 children, were helped by those who gave to the "*Together in Charity*" collection.

A hallmark of our diocese has been your generous response to those in need. Thanks to your generosity, we have consistently risen to the occasion of following the Gospel mandate "what you have done for the least, you have done for me." In that spirit I ask you to please respond as your means allow, making a sacrificial offering for those in need who seek our help. Your assistance becomes the actual presence of Christ in someone's life.

I thank you in advance for your generosity and assure you of my prayerful good wishes for the year ahead. Be assured of my prayers for a blessed Advent and a glorious Christmas! Please pray for me too.

With renewed best wishes, I remain,

Yours in Christ,

Most Reverend James F. Checchio, JCD, MBA  
Bishop of Metuchen