



*Office of the Bishop*

# *Diocese of Hamilton in Bermuda*

## **BISHOP'S ANNUAL DIOCESAN APPEAL 2015**

14<sup>th</sup> February 2015

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we once again begin our spiritual journey to Easter with the reception of blessed ashes on next Wednesday, we pray: "O God ...through a steadfast observance of Lent, may we gain pardon for sins and newness of life after the likeness of your Risen Son." The Gospel of Mathew that is read at the Mass for Ash Wednesday contains the teaching of Jesus that the Church recommends for all of Lent: Prayer, Penance and Almsgiving. Now is the time to decide how each of us can best make these 40 days of Lent more spiritually fulfilling. Increased prayer might include attendance at weekday Mass and experiencing weekly Stations of the Cross. Diocesan Penance services will give each of us the opportunity to examine our conscience anew by making a sincere confession in preparation of the great Easter Feast. And, as has been our custom for the past several years, the Bishop's Annual Diocesan Appeal, conducted during the Lenten season, provides an ideal opportunity to answer the call of Almsgiving through a sacrificial gift to this Appeal.

The 2015 Diocesan Appeal takes place in the context of an important historical event in the life of the Catholic Church in Bermuda. This year Mount Saint Agnes Academy marks its 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, founded by the Sisters of Charity in 1890. In two years' time we will celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the formal establishment of our Catholic Diocese, with a new Bishop in place leading our faith community into its sixth decade. In the interim, the search process for my successor continues. These milestones call us to give thanks to God for all the spiritual benefits that have come to us.

As in past years, I will visit each of the parishes of the Diocese and look forward to praying with the people who gather at all the Masses and sharing a personal message.

The schedule of visits follows:

Stella Maris Parish	14 - 15 February
St. Theresa's Cathedral Parish	21 - 22 February
St. Patrick's Parish	28 Feb – 1 March
St. Anthony's Parish	7 - 8 March
St. Joseph Parish	8 March

Last year the goal for the Appeal was set at \$151,500. Once again, through the generosity of the faithful members of the Catholic Church in Bermuda, it was exceeded with a total collection of \$171,017. Sincere thanks to all who accepted the call to Lenten Almsgiving and contributed so generously. May this commitment to sacrificial giving continue this year to reach our target of \$155,000.

An informational brochure with a donation envelope will be distributed in all the parishes on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of March. The Diocesan Financial Report for 2014 will be included to share with you a financial accounting of the Diocese, as well as the projected allocation of funds collected in this year's Appeal.

The chart below provides a snapshot of the past two years' results as well as the parish goals for 2015.

PARISHES	2015 Goal	2014 Goal	2014 Actual	2013 Goal	2013 Actual
St. Anthony's Parish	<b>25,190</b>	27,240	28,540	26,885	27,135
St. Joseph's Parish	<b>7,375</b>	7,545	7,545	8,907	6,400
St. Michael's Parish	<b>20,590</b>	18,477	27,613	18,466	26,936
St. Patrick Parish	<b>36,815</b>	32,857	43,841	40,230	41,335
St. Theresa's Parish	<b>53,580</b>	53,240	58,730	44,792	47,956
Stella Maris Parish	<b>11,450</b>	12,141	4,748	10,720	5,673
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>155,000</b>	<b>151,500</b>	<b>171,017</b>	<b>150,000</b>	<b>155,435</b>

We are grateful for 125 years of quality Catholic education which has provided the opportunity for excellence in intellectual and spiritual growth. Thousands of MSA graduates have contributed to the vitality of our Church and have had a positive and profound impact on our country. We thank God for the establishment of the Diocese of Hamilton in Bermuda nearly fifty years ago and the continued growth of the Church in Bermuda.

I hope and pray that our gratitude for God's blessings will reflect our love for the Church and translate into generous support for this year's Appeal. In this way, the mission and ministries of the Catholic Church will continue to flourish in Bermuda.

May God's blessing accompany us on our Lenten journey so that our prayer, penance and almsgiving will prepare us spiritually to celebrate with great joy the Paschal Mystery of our salvation at Easter and throughout the 50 days of the Easter Season.

Fraternally in Christ Risen,

*Bishop Robert J. Kurty, CR*

Diocesan Penance Service	Thursday	19 <sup>th</sup> March
	Tuesday	24 <sup>th</sup> March
Bishop's Appeal Collection	Sunday	22 <sup>nd</sup> March
	Palm Sunday	29 <sup>th</sup> March
Mass of Chrism	Tuesday	31 <sup>st</sup> March
Holy Thursday	Thursday	2 <sup>nd</sup> April
Good Friday	Friday	3 <sup>rd</sup> April
Easter	Sunday	5 <sup>th</sup> April