



RENEW FAITH • BUILD COMMUNION • INSPIRE HOPE

April 2016

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

“Mercy is the force that reawakens us to new life and instills in us the courage to look to the future with hope.”
~Pope Francis, *Merciful Like the Father / Misericordiae Vultus*

These inspiring words were written recently by our Holy Father, Pope Francis, when he called the Church to observe the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy throughout this year, until the Solemnity of Christ the King on November 20, 2016. In our Diocese, we try to make those beautiful words come alive through many diocesan-wide opportunities to experience God’s mercy from “Days of Prayer and Reflection” to pilgrimages to the Holy Door at our Cathedral Church of St. Augustine.

We are at a historic time in the life of our local Church as we embark on a new Diocesan Pastoral Plan, designed to help us meet our current challenges as well as to reawaken our faith throughout our 59 parishes. With the help and guidance of my office and the Diocesan Pastoral staff, we will be supporting in every way necessary all our parishes in a powerful example of shared ministry. In addition there are many other important diocesan ministries including the education and support of our seminarians, assistance to catechists in the faith teaching of more than 8,000 youth in our religious education programs and Catholic schools, and the formation of close to 200 lay leaders in both the San Agustin Instituto and the Lay Ecclesial Ministry Institute. All these and more are made possible through the gifts to the Bishop’s Annual Appeal.

At this important moment, I once again ask you to generously support the Bishop’s Annual Appeal. I am very grateful for your past support, and I ask you to join with me in helping the important ministry of the Church to grow and spread throughout our Diocese.

Dear sisters and brothers in the family of faith, let us pray for one another and may we experience God’s mercy and be instruments of helping one another to see the Father’s Face of Mercy.

Remaining one with you as we proclaim, live and spread the mercy of Christ to all the world, I am

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Paul J. Bradley
Bishop of Kalamazoo