



THE DIOCESE OF KALAMAZOO
Office of the Bishop

January 7, 2018

Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ---- Peace be with you!

As we join with the entire Church celebrating the glorious Feast of the Epiphany of Our Lord, the day His Presence was revealed to the entire world, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge some of the many ways the Church here in our Diocese of Kalamazoo is also revealing the Love of Jesus.

Certainly 2017 was a year of great challenges and tragic circumstances in our country and various parts of the world, from natural disasters, to horrific acts of violence, to economic uncertainty for many. What remained constant, as well as a source of great inspiration, is the overwhelming generosity shown by you, the Faithful of our Diocese, to those in need. Your generous response is a reflection of the Father's unconditional Love for those members of our human family in need here in the nine counties of our Diocese, and beyond.

It is with deep gratitude that I share with you the extent of your generosity. As of November 3, 2017, you donated:

- **\$109,050** for Hurricane Harvey disaster relief;
- **\$77,744** for Hurricane Irma disaster relief;
- **\$62,715** for Peter's Pence collection;
- **\$32,385** for the Trinity Dome in the National Basilica Collection;
- **\$60,745** collected for the upkeep of the Holy Land churches;
- **\$46,260** for the Rice Bowl Collection;
- **\$68,195** combined total for the Churches in Easter Europe, Africa and Latin America;
- **\$30,000** from the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD); and
- **\$77,305** for Catholic Relief Services (CRS).

The grand total of all these collections to help people in need is: **\$564,399.**

In addition, I am pleased to report that since the beginning of the Diocesan Priests' Retirement Collection in 2014, which was started to help offset the underfunding of the Priest's Pension Plan due to market fluctuations, we have raised an impressive \$615,285 over the past four years. This incredible financial response has now made our Diocesan Priest's Retirement Fund healthy, which will secure support for our

retired diocesan priests who have served and ministered so selflessly to the Faithful of our Diocese. In fact, because of this more-secured Pension Plan, we are now able to slightly increase the monthly pension benefit for our currently retired priests for the first time in 10 years, beginning this month.

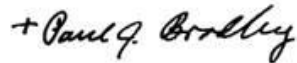
All of these examples are powerful and tangible demonstrations of the Gospel virtues of compassion and loving outreach to the poor, and dramatically illustrates the Heart of Jesus alive in the People of our Local Church in the Diocese of Kalamazoo.

I also wish to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for your generous support of the *Bishop's Annual Appeal*, which makes possible all the Diocesan ministries, services and programs which benefit the entire Diocese. We are committed to continually finding improved ways to inform our Faithful people how those funds are making a difference in the lives of those we serve. We will be enhancing those channels of information so that you will be better-informed and more confident, knowing that your monetary gifts are prudently and effectively being used.

At the beginning of this New Year, and as we celebrate this blessed Feast of Epiphany, I am very grateful for your spirit of generosity and stewardship, and I pray that we will continue to move forward together as we advance the mission of the Church in this part of the Kingdom of God.

Assuring you of my daily prayers for you and your families each and every day, and humbly asking for your prayers for me as well, I remain

Faithfully yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Paul J. Bradley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

Most Rev. Paul J. Bradley
Bishop of Kalamazoo