

**FROM FATHER JOHN:** *“We make a living by what we get but we make a life by what we give.”* ~ Winston Churchill

***The Lord is kind and merciful!***



Since the beginning of his pontificate, Pope Francis has reminded each of us that we are called to help, support and care for those who are less fortunate than us, those who are vulnerable and those who are in need of our help.

*“In this period of crisis today, it is important not to turn in on ourselves, burying our own talent, our spiritual, intellectual, and material riches, everything that the Lord has given us; but, rather to open ourselves, to be supportive, to be attentive to others. Set your stakes on great ideals, the ideals that enlarge the heart, the ideals of service that make your talents fruitful. Life is not given to us to be jealously guarded for ourselves, but is given to us so that we may give it in turn.”* ~ Pope Francis, April 24, 2013

The 2023 Catholic Ministries Annual Appeal (CMAA) is the vehicle the Church of Joliet uses to fund all the ministries that we sponsor to bring healing, mercy, compassion and love into people’s lives. All the people of the Diocese of Joliet come together each year to work diligently to create and build all the different ministries that care for people in need in Channahon and the seven counties that make up our Diocese.

One of the great Traditions in the Church, is the practice of Almsgiving during Lent. As our Lord Jesus says to us in the gospel on Ash Wednesday,

*“When you give alms, do not blow a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win the praise of others. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing, so that your almsgiving may be secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you.”*

Making a gift to the Catholic Ministries Annual Appeal is a great way to give alms during this Lenten season.

As pastor, I recognize that St. Ann Parish is not an entity in of itself but is one of approximately 120 parishes that make up the Church of Joliet. It is important that all of us throughout the Church of Joliet work to support the vital ministry of the diocese in addition to supporting the vital ministry of our parish.

***I am both very proud and grateful for all your past generosity to the Catholic Ministries Annual Appeal.***

The one thing I really don't like about being a priest is having to ask for money, in fact, I hate it. But, our Annual Appeal supports the ministry of “sanctifying, serving, and teaching” throughout the Diocese of Joliet. Catholic Charities is able to shelter the homeless, feed the hungry and care for veterans in need. All because of this appeal. Our schools educate our children and form them into our country's future leaders. Our Religious Education programs educate our children in the faith. Together with our Youth Ministry programs, they pass our Catholic faith to our children. All because of this appeal.

Our Office of Family Life ministers to people who suffer the loss of a loved one and assists families who are in need of healing and wholeness. Our Pro-Life Office supports the dignity and sanctity of all human life. Our Peace and Justice Office ministers to the incarcerated. Our Missions Office sponsors missions to impoverished communities across the world and supports Catholic Relief Service throughout the world. All because of this appeal.

Our Vocations Office supports vocations to priesthood and religious life, helps men and women discern whether they are called to serve the Church, and you, as a priest, sister or brother. Twenty-three men from our diocese are currently in the

seminary studying for the priesthood. All because of this appeal – and the Work of the Holy Spirit!

Once again, thank you for all your generous support of our parish and the 2023 Catholic Ministries Annual Appeal.

May God Bless you and all those who love the Lord.

