

My Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

In the Gospel of Luke Jesus tells a riveting story about a man on the road of life walking from Jerusalem to Jericho. The man comes on hard times for he is stripped, beaten, and robbed and left to the side of the road. Two different people encounter him and walk right by ignoring his plight. One of those individuals was a priest. But then there is a foreigner, a Samaritan, who upon seeing this man stops in his path and shows compassion by treating his wounds, placing him on his donkey, taking him to an inn, and caring for him. The next day before this Samaritan departs, he gives the innkeeper money to care for the man with the promise that he would cover any additional expenses. Because of his kindness to a person in need, this stranger is known as the Good Samaritan. Jesus, in telling this story, concludes with a message, "Go, and do likewise." (Luke 10:37)

Every year in this local Church through the Annual Diocesan Appeal: One in Hope, One in Mission we are called to follow in the footsteps of the Good Samaritan and heed the mandate of Jesus to, "Go, and do likewise."

The Annual Diocesan Appeal provides an opportunity for us as a Church to intentionally pray for those in need and generously provide financial support for their care through the efforts of Catholic Charities and other diocesan ministries.

Having just celebrated our 80th year as a diocese I am grateful for the rich legacy of giving that precedes us. I invite you today to build upon that legacy of compassion and love through your prayers and monetary gift. There are many people on the side of the road in need of our care and attention. They need us to bring the comfort and peace of Jesus Christ to them. Like the Good Samaritan, we can bring hope to all in need and in so many ways continue the mission of the Church.

Thank you for taking time to behold those on the road, especially those in need. Thank you for helping us to be a vibrant and caring Church that responds to our Christian obligation to, "Go, and do likewise." Together, let us pray, "That all may be one." May we be one in hope and one in mission!

Prayerfully and Gratefully in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ David J. Bonnar". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Most Reverend David J. Bonnar

Bishop of Youngstown