



OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

One Faith, One Family

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we enter the season of Lent 2018, we embark also on our annual *Together We Serve* appeal. This year, I invite you to reflect on the theme “One Faith, One Family,” a reminder that in baptism, each of us is born into a larger spiritual family.

Pope Francis tells us that by virtue of baptism, “all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples.” (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*; Mt. 28:19). As in any family, we each have responsibilities to others. While not all of us are called to direct missionary service, all of us can indeed be instruments of God’s mercy and compassion, locally and globally, through our financial sacrifices in His name.

I am grateful to all of the missionary disciples from our archdiocese who have responded so generously to the call of the Holy Father. Your gifts through *Together We Serve* enable us to make a greater difference as a family than we ever could as individuals.

You may be helping a terminally ill homeless man live his final days surrounded in comfort and friendship through Catholic Social Services. You may be addressing the root causes of poverty and conflict in the Global South through Caritas Canada – Development and Peace. You may be helping the Holy Father respond to global emergencies through the Pope’s Pastoral Works. You may be helping to spread the light of Christ far and wide through the Evangelization of Nations, Needs of the Church in the Holy Land, or our northern twin Diocese of Mackenzie-Fort Smith.

You may be helping a young man discern his priestly vocation through St. Joseph Seminary. You may be giving a young woman the theological education she needs to teach our precious faith or to serve as a chaplain or parish pastoral assistant. You may be helping our bishops in their ministry to the dioceses of Canada. You may be helping to ensure a dignified retirement for the priests who have devoted their lives to our service.

You may never know the precise difference you have made, but you will know that it mattered to someone. As the Apostle Paul tells us, our gifts are meant to be shared:

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (1 Corinthians 12:4-7)

Let us together, as one family in Christ, share the abundant gifts we have been given. And May God continue to bless you with his abundant mercy.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

✠Richard W. Smith
Archbishop of Edmonton
January 2018