



ARCHDIOCESE OF BOSTON

OFFICE OF THE CARDINAL | 66 BROOKS DRIVE | BRAINTREE, MA 02184

March 2009

Dear Friends in Christ:

In recent months I have had the opportunity to reflect on the blessings of my first five years as your Archbishop. I am thankful for the spiritual renewal that is taking place throughout the Archdiocese and encouraged by an increasing confidence in the future of our local Church.

During my visits to parishes, I have witnessed the dedication of our pastors and priests, the commitment of parishioners to the mission of the Church, and the strength and vitality of so many parish ministries.

These difficult economic times serve to remind us of how essential the work of the Church is to our lives and those of our neighbors, Catholic and non-Catholic alike. During the Lenten season we are challenged to respond to our ongoing need for conversion and our mission to provide for the needs of so many people who rely on the Church for their physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

This year's **Catholic Appeal** theme, *Responding to God's Grace, Renewing Our Church*, is an invitation for all Catholics to join in this renewal through prayer, service, and sharing:

Pray – Lent is a season to make time and space for God in our lives. Set aside time for Jesus, through daily prayer, reading the Word of God in the Bible, and attending Mass. Inviting family or friends to join you in these spiritual activities will be of great benefit to both you and them.

Serve – Christ invites us to invest our time and talent in service to the Church's mission. Please consider increasing your involvement in your parish or in one of the Archdiocese's central ministries. If you are not yet participating in parish or other Archdiocesan activities, Lent is a wonderful time to begin.

Share – *Please consider sharing your material blessings through a gift to the Catholic Appeal.* Your gift provides critical funding for the shared ministries of the Archdiocese and essential support for our parishes, schools and agencies, and the people we serve.

Please take home with you this weekend the information envelope on the Catholic Appeal. The enclosed brochure provides information concerning all the ministries that are supported by your gifts to the Catholic Appeal. There is also an intent card and reply envelope for your use. Gifts can be submitted in the collection basket in your parish on **Appeal Weekend: March 7-8, 2009** or mailed to us.

Thank you for all you have done, and all you will do, to help with the renewal of the Church and to be a sign of God's love to others.

With the assurance of my prayers for you and all your loved ones, I remain,

Archbishop of Boston