



BISHOP'S SERVICES APPEAL VIDEO/AUDIO MESSAGE

Hello, I am Bishop Douglas Deshotel, Bishop of the Diocese of Lafayette. A native of Louisiana, I was born and raised in the small town of Basile. I am overjoyed, that in His divine providence, our good Lord has seen fit to bring me back home, to serve you – the great people of the Diocese of Lafayette. God is good, and I feel blest to be home.

Since my installation as your seventh bishop earlier this Spring, I have already had the pleasure of meeting many of you; As I come to know you, I look forward to the opportunities to engage with you in the great work God has given us to do as His Church family, here in South Louisiana.

In my short time here, I see just how strong the Catholic faith is in the Diocese of Lafayette. I see it in the vibrant life of our parish families, and your eagerness to know God and serve him through our faith communities. I see it in your desire to encounter Jesus, when I join with you in the Eucharist, and when I share your joy through the gift of the Holy Spirit made present to your children and grandchildren in Confirmation. And, I see it in the many wonderful works you do to help others in need. I marvel, at not only the beauty of this area, but the beauty of the people; the people who are firm in their faith. The Diocese of Lafayette is a diocese that lives its faith, each and every day. Yes, how blest *we* are as God watches over us, continues to care for us, and strengthens us for the work He has given us to do.

Many of you are aware of the Diocesan wide **Centennial Campaign: *Building Our Future Together***; which seeks to gain support for the **future** needs of our Diocese. Many of you have already been given the opportunity to participate in the Centennial Campaign, by making a gift or pledge through your church parish; and for that I am grateful. Please continue to be faithful to your Centennial Campaign pledge. Others will have the opportunity to learn more about the Centennial Campaign in the coming months. Please be generous, knowing that your pledged gift represents an investment in the **future** of **our Diocese**.

Today, I am asking that you draw your attention to the Bishop's Services Appeal, and its funding of the **current, present** needs of the Church in the Diocese of Lafayette. The works funded by this Appeal are made possible only by the generosity of individuals within the Church, faithful Catholics like you. The Annual Bishop's Services Appeal provides the needed financial support for ongoing Diocesan wide activities – the Diocesan sponsored programs, ministries and services that play a vital role in our Church's mission.

Christ's Love Compels Us is the theme for the 43rd Annual Bishop's Services Appeal. Saint Paul wrote to the Corinthians: "*For Christ's love compels us, because we are*





convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.” These words express the meaning and the purpose of the programs, ministries and services supported by the Bishop’s Services Appeal – *Supporting the Works of Christ*. It is in Christ’s love for us, it is in His dying for all, that we no longer live for ourselves, but for others. It is Christ’s love for us, that urges us on, that compels us to fulfill the mission of the Church, the mission Christ himself invites us to embrace. Or as St. Paul goes on to say “We are ambassadors for Christ, as if God were appealing through us.”

Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, has so beautifully elevated the theme of being a Church of, and for, the poor. As modern day disciples of Christ, we are compelled to have a special love and concern for the poor. We must have a spirit of genuine solidarity to promote the good of every person, and the good of the whole person. We see in every person the living image of God himself – a brother, or a sister, for whom Christ died. Speaking to a General Audience in Saint Peter’s Square in September of 2013, Pope Francis remarked, *“Wherever we go, even to the smallest parish in the most remote corner of this earth, there is the one Church. We are at home, we are in the family, we are among are brothers and sisters.”*

The BISHOP’S SERVICES APPEAL is an essential source of funding that has been *Supporting the Works of Christ* by serving others and ministering to those in need since 1973. The success of this effort is only accomplished as a result of the combined efforts of our 121 church parishes and 28 missions. The strength of our unity and working together collectively enables our Diocese to reach across boundaries that define our church parishes as well as the eight civil parishes that make up the Diocese of Lafayette. It is together that we are able to make available vital programs, ministries and services through the generosity of parishioners and donors.

Christ’s Love Compels Us to support the many good works of the Diocese of Lafayette that make possible programs that build the promise of our future through strong Catholic marriages and families as well as faith-filled vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life.

Christ’s Love Compels Us to support the many good works of the Diocese of Lafayette that make possible programs that make Christ come alive and the Kingdom of God present through the Sacraments and faithful worship, through education and formation of our youth in our Catholic schools and by spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ through the Acadiana Catholic and our television ministry.

Christ’s Love Compels Us to support the many good works of the Diocese of Lafayette that make possible programs that become the hands and feet of Christ to those from the many cultures in Acadiana and to those with special needs, those who are most in need, and those who are the stranger among us.

Your generosity to the Bishop’s Services Appeal bears witness to the works of the Church





through the Diocesan wide ministries and services that benefit from your generosity.

I invite you to join with me today in supporting the 2016-2017 Bishop's Services Appeal. Your gift to the Appeal enhances current Diocesan wide efforts to provide hope, dignity and compassionate care in the lives of others. Your gift will make a significant impact through the programs, ministries and services supported by the Bishop's Services Appeal. These important works of charity are a reminder that as faithful Catholics, *we are compelled* to be part of a Church, a communion of believers, which is greater than ourselves; and not limited to our local church parishes.

To be disciples of Jesus Christ and good stewards of the gifts we have been given, we acknowledge that by supporting the Bishop's Services Appeal we return to the Lord what has been received. To quote Henri Nouwen; *"What we have received is so beautiful and so rich that we cannot hold it for ourselves but feel compelled to bring it to every human being on earth."*

I hope, I pray, and I ask of you today, to consider a financial contribution to support the Bishop's Services Appeal and carry out Christ's mission of love. I know that I can count on you; for ***Christ's Love Compels Us...***

And May God bless you; In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

