



OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

February 22, 2022

Together We Serve Annual Appeal 2022 – Change is Coming!

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we enter into the season of Lent 2022, we are all called to prepare our hearts for the glorious Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ at Easter. With its focus on prayer, fasting and almsgiving, Lent has also been the time when our Local Church has embarked on *Together We Serve*, our Annual Appeal. But that will change this year, as we refresh and relaunch *Together We Serve* in the Archdiocese of Edmonton.

During the past two years, most of our parishes have experienced steep declines in financial support. Despite these unprecedented challenges, many Catholics continued to give to their parishes and to *Together We Serve*. The annual appeal achieved 65% of its \$2 million goal in 2020 and 71% in 2021 – that is no small accomplishment! It is with deep humility and gratitude that I say “Thank You” to all those who gave during these challenging times.

This past year also invited us to stop and reflect on *Together We Serve*. We want to ensure that it will continue to be a sign of unity for Catholics in the Archdiocese of Edmonton for years to come. On the basis of that review, we are making the following changes:

- The 2022 Campaign Goal will be \$1.5 million, reduced from \$2 million. Parish targets have also been adjusted, in recognition of the challenges our parishes and parishioners have faced during the pandemic response.
- 70% of *Together We Serve* funds will be allocated to local needs and beneficiaries. These will continue to include our fellow workers in the vineyard: Catholic Social Services, St. Joseph Seminary, Newman Theological College, St. Joseph College, and the needs of our retired priests.

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- Starting this year, up to 15% of funds will be allocated to local priorities and projects recommended by our *Together We Serve* Advisory Committee.
- Development and Peace has been given permission to return to running its own campaign in our parishes during Lent, and will no longer be a *Together We Serve* beneficiary. Be assured that Development and Peace continues to have my full support and I encourage all Catholics to give generously to *Share Lent*.
- The more focused part of the *Together We Serve* campaign will move from Lent to the Fall, starting in September 2022. That means you will see more information about our beneficiaries and will have more opportunities to give – but you don't have to wait for Fall. Many people give to *Together We Serve* year round, through monthly gifts and parish collections.

As we embark on this new course, I invite you to reflect on your own understanding of *Together We Serve*. When you give to *Together We Serve* you are not simply giving to another charity or worthy cause. You are helping to demonstrate to other Catholics and to the world that we are one Church, acting together to advance the Mission given to us by Jesus Christ. As St. Paul wrote to the Church in Corinth:

Your very giving proves the reality of your faith, and that means that people thank God that you practise the Gospel that you profess to believe in, as well for the actual gifts you make to them and to others. – 2 Cor 9:12-13

May God continue to bless you and your families with his abundant grace and mercy.

Yours sincerely in Christ,



✠Richard W. Smith
Archbishop of Edmonton

www.caedm.ca/togetherweserve