



DIOCESE OF VENICE IN FLORIDA
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

March 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

During Lent Catholics embark on a forty-day journey which begins on Ash Wednesday. It is precisely through our Lenten prayers, fasting and almsgiving that we respond to Pope Francis's invitation to *Share the Journey* by supporting those worldwide who are forced to flee their homes to find safety or better opportunities.

Throughout the Season of Lent, we have the opportunity to participate in the symbolic Catholic Relief Service, (CRS) Rice Bowl, a faith-in-action program that invites us to encounter the needs of the world with the hope of the Resurrection. Reflection on how we plan to encounter Christ during Lent and the subsequent action taken can be transformative.

As we prepare for this Holy Season of Lent, it is especially important to come together as a family and reflect on the crosses of hunger, poverty and war that have forced our brothers and sisters to flee their homes. In so doing, let us pledge to stand alongside these members of our human family, supporting them as the Gospel calls us to do.

Please give charitably to Catholic Relief Services' Operation Rice Bowl. While a portion of your aid goes to CRS, twenty-five percent of the total contribution remains here in the Diocese of Venice supporting families through food pantries and soup kitchens. On behalf of those who benefit from your participation, I express their appreciation and add my acknowledgement of your continued support. Thank you for your generosity!

I take this opportunity to extend to you my continued consideration as well as my prayers throughout this Lenten Season.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Frank J. Dewane
Bishop of the Diocese of
Venice in Florida