



All God's People
- United in Faith -
2017 BISHOP'S APPEAL

February 2017

Looking back at 2016, many memories come to mind. I reflect on the many encounters and experiences the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy brought to our lives. I witnessed how our diocese made great efforts to answer Pope Francis' call to bring the experience of God's mercy to the whole world. However, we also witnessed violent acts of terror, tragic natural disasters, and fear of uncertainty for many across our nation.

As we begin 2017, it is important to unite as brothers and sisters in one Faith and remember we are all loved by our Lord. When considering the theme for the **2017 Bishop's Appeal**, I wanted to convey a message of unity and love, which is why we chose *All God's People - United in Faith*.

I am grateful for the numerous people who not only make a monetary sacrifice, but who also take time away from their families and lives to help with the many needs of the diocese. Without the support of our donors, we would not be able to carry out our ministries to the East Bay community.

Our goal this year is to raise over \$2.5 million for the 2017 Bishop's Appeal which provides funds for important ministries such as faith formation, Catholic schools and parishes in need, CYO programs, religious education, clergy support, and safe environment programs. Through these ministries, we are able to provide our people with the sacraments, education in the Faith, and spiritual leadership necessary to grow stronger in Faith.

If you, your family members, friends, or loved ones have benefited from any diocesan ministries, I ask you to consider joining our efforts by making a contribution to the Bishop's Appeal. All gifts to the 2017 Bishop's Appeal are important and we would not be able to carry out our services without the generous giving of parishioners like you. Those individuals who are blessed with more are challenged to give more, but I am asking all of our diocesan family to come together "unite in faith" by participating in this year's Appeal. A pledge spread out over ten months will help countless individuals and can help us reach our goal. If you are financially able to make a gift of \$200, or a pledge of \$20 per month, I ask you to please consider it.

Saint Ignatius of Loyola said, "Lord, teach me to be generous, to serve you as you deserve, to give and not count the cost..." Just as Saint Ignatius prayed, I also pray that our Lord will inspire your generosity for the mission of the Church. Know that I am grateful for your support of the Diocese of Oakland and our efforts to carry out Christ's mission. May you and your family continue to receive God's blessings and unending love.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

The Most Reverend Michael C. Barber, S.J.
Bishop of Oakland