



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

DIOCESE OF LAFAYETTE

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March 2, 2019

To be Read at all Masses March 2 and 3, 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Wednesday of this week, Ash Wednesday, begins the holy season of Lent. For forty days we enter into the desert with our Blessed Lord. We go there to imitate Him in prayer, fasting and works of charity. By following Him in the desert, by carrying the cross, we will also imitate Him in resurrection to new and everlasting life.

Charity, helping those in need, is one of the central missions for each of us as individuals and as a Diocese. Charity is so important that Our Lord makes it a condition to enter heaven. "I was hungry and you gave me to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was naked and you clothed me, a stranger and you made me feel welcomed." (Mathew 25).

Our Catholic Charities of Acadiana gives us the opportunity to fulfill the command of the Lord to care for the needs of others. Just last year, Catholic Charities of Acadiana provided 585 people with the safety of shelter, shared 94,000 meals with those experiencing hunger, and provided for the basic needs for 411 people experiencing homelessness with 4000 showers and by washing 1,759 loads of laundry. Catholic Charities of Acadiana also utilized more than \$120,000 in preventing households from experiencing homelessness and an additional \$627,000 in rebuilding and repairing homes impacted by the 2016 floods.

So many have been helped by Catholic Charities of Acadiana. There is more that can be done. I am asking every parish and mission in the Diocese of Lafayette to begin the season of Lent by taking up a collection at all Ash Wednesday Masses. I ask that you help donate to Catholic Charities whatever you can. The amount you give is between you and God. We in Acadiana are by nature generous people and seek to help those in need. Please help as we serve Christ by helping others.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Most Reverend J. Douglas Deshotel, D.D.
Bishop of Lafayette

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