



DIocese of METUCHEN

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OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

December 15, 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we continue to celebrate this season of Christmas, it is a special joy to announce over and over the wonderful truth that God has made His home among us in His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. While the world quickly moves on in a never-ending chase for the next exciting thing, we are called to reflect again on the truth that God is with His people. Because we celebrate Christmas...what does that mean for the rest of the year?

This year we continue to be challenged with emergency needs that arise from people coming to our parishes for additional help. This fund as you know is used solely for those who show up in need of emergency assistance. Every year we have a special opportunity to participate in an annual local collection: *Together in Charity*. On the weekend of January 8/9, 2022 or another weekend in January, the annual "Together in Charity" collection will be taken up at all Masses. The collection funds our Catholic Charities' Emergency Assistance Program, which aids parishes when individuals and families are faced with urgent financial, housing, or medical needs beyond a parish's capacity to meet. Your parish may have been one of those helped by the program, since in the last year 39 (43%) of our parishes turned to Catholic Charities for emergency assistance from this fund. In total, 222 households, consisting of 372 adults and 272 children, were helped by those who gave to the Together in Charity Collection. .

As we celebrate our 40th Anniversary, one of our hallmarks as a local Church has been our consistent and generous response to those in need. We have consistently risen to the occasion of following the Gospel mandate "what you have done for the least, you have done for me." In that spirit I ask you please respond as your means allow, making a sacrificial offering for those who seek our help. Our assistance becomes the actual presence of Christ in someone's life.

I thank you in advance for your generosity and assure you of my prayerful good wishes for the year ahead. Be assured of my prayers for a blessed Advent and a glorious Christmas! Please pray for me too.

With renewed best wishes, I remain,

Yours in Christ,

Most Reverend James F. Checchio, JCD, MBA
Bishop of Metuchen