



Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I give thanks to the Lord for the light of a new dawn which we all head towards together after a year and a half of so much chaos, confusion and hurt. Together we have weathered many storms over the last 18 months.

We have emerged more keenly aware of all that we have in our lives for which to give thanks to the Lord. Even through the darkness and uncertainty, God has faithfully carried us onward towards the hope of the new future. I am always especially filled with hope each time I encounter one of the many thousands of people who are so grateful for the support of their Catholic community during times of crisis.

Just as the apostles proclaim after Jesus calms the storm at sea, "Who then is this, who commands even the winds and the sea, and they obey him?" we are reminded of just how powerful Jesus' ability to bring peace is.

With the waves crashing around the boat and the apostles fearing for their lives, Jesus says but one word, and the storm subsides. It is in times of great suffering which we realize most how much we need the strength and support of each other. Jesus has given us all the gift of each other to provide the support and strength which we need to survive and draw ever closer to Him.

As a witness to the great generosity of spirit I see daily among each of you in the Diocese of Fort Worth, I am reminded that there is much to be grateful for. In gratitude for Jesus' care for each of us, we look to Him as the source of hope for all those He calls us to care for.

Your support of the Annual Diocesan Appeal provides essential functioning and support for our financially struggling parishes, as well as ministries, education and outreach programs which affect thousands in the Diocese of Fort Worth. From incarcerated persons to college students, children preparing for the Sacraments, to men and women discerning a call to serve the Church through the priesthood and consecrated life, no story is forgotten.

It is a big task, but together we can bring the light of Christ to all.

Next week is Commitment Weekend for the Annual Diocesan Appeal. The chosen scripture theme for this year's campaign, "Let Us Give Thanks," from Psalms 107 reminds us to remember in gratitude our many blessings. We are striving for 100 percent participation from every family. Even if you have not supported the appeal in the past, please consider a monthly recurring gift to this important effort. With trust in the calming word of Jesus and in thanksgiving to the Lord, we gratefully respond in stewardship for the common good of all.

Your story is not forgotten by God. Your support never goes unnoticed by Him who created all. I am grateful beyond measure for your generosity.

May God bless you!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Michael F. Olson, STD, MA
Bishop of Fort Worth