



*For you know the gracious act of our Lord Jesus Christ,
that for your sake he became poor although he was rich,
so that by his poverty you might become rich (2 Cor 8:9).*

My Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, begins his apostolic letter marking the Sixth World Day of the Poor with the words of St. Paul to the Corinthians. "Jesus Christ . . . for your sakes became poor." St. Paul spoke to the early Christians as he speaks to us through Jesus for all time reminding us that by our Catholic faith, we are compelled to live in solidarity with all God's people. Our Holy Father asks us to "reflect upon the many forms of poverty all around us."

It is fitting that we pray this Scripture as we take up the Annual Collection for Catholic Charities of Central Florida the weekend of November 19, 20. This important Collection is our prayer to God in thanksgiving for all we are given as we "keep our gaze fixed on Jesus" and offer our return to Him who became poor that we might become rich.

The early Christian community suffered great hardship due to a food shortage and the Apostle Paul set about organizing a great collection to aid those in need. Two thousand years later, during the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, our Holy Father reminds us that "we do the same thing, pooling our offerings so that the community can provide for the needs of the poor." We join our efforts in solidarity with our ancestors and those whom we now serve through, with and in the love of Jesus.

Today, our neighbors throughout Central Florida continue to experience many difficulties; finding affordable housing, financial assistance, food support and medical care. They come to the outreach centers of Catholic Charities of Central Florida for solace and hopefully some respite through our resources. So many of our neighbors within the Diocese of Orlando were also affected by Hurricane Ian and their needs will continue long after emergency response teams complete their visitations. Catholic Charities of Central Florida staff and volunteers work tirelessly to offer sustenance to these men, women and families. Your support of our ministries through the Annual Collection helps us to praise God by serving as Christ to each one.

Jesus' treasure is His love offered as the "Bread of Life" (Jn 6:35) that we might never hunger. Let us share what He gives that all might receive. Give what you are able that the treasure of Heaven reign our daily living. I pray with gratitude for your generosity.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "John Noonan", is written over a small, circular, embossed seal. The seal features a cross and other heraldic symbols, likely the coat of arms of the Diocese of Orlando.

Most Reverend John Noonan
Bishop of Orlando