My Dear Friends in Christ,

The poor widow in Luke’s Gospel account who gave two small coins -- essentially everything she had -- to the treasury is a powerful example of what it means to be a Christian steward.

The U.S. Bishops have authored a Pastoral Letter on Christian Stewardship, *To Be a Christian Steward*, which states, “As Christian stewards, we receive God’s gifts gratefully, cultivate them responsibly, share them lovingly in justice with others, and return them with increase to the Lord.” As I read those words, I am reminded not only of the poor widow in Luke’s Gospel but also of the tremendous generosity of time, talent and treasure that I have continuously witnessed from the faithful in the Diocese of Biloxi, even in the midst of a pandemic where resources have been stretched thin.

Discipleship calls us to be good stewards of all that God has given to us, and stewardship is necessary to foster evangelization. As the bishops write:

- Mature disciples make a conscious decision to follow Jesus, no matter what the cost.
- Christian disciples experience conversion -- life-shaping changes of mind and heart -- and commit their very selves to the Lord.
- Christian stewards respond in a particular way to the call to be a disciple. Stewardship has the power to shape and mold our understanding of our lives and the way in which we live.

Furthermore, the letter states, “Jesus’ disciples and Christian stewards recognize God as the origin of life, giver of freedom, and source of all things. We are grateful for the gifts we have received and are eager to use them to show our love for God and for one another. We look to the life and teaching of Jesus for guidance in living as Christian stewards.”

This eagerness of sharing our God-given gifts is reflected in the current State of the Diocese Report. For example, Catholic Charities of South Mississippi, with the help of your contributions to the Catholic Sharing Appeal and other donors, distributed 2,201,569 pounds of food through Twelve Baskets Food Bank, $747,179 provided for housing and utility assistance in the past fiscal year. Catholic Charities also assisted families who had their homes seriously damaged in tornadoes and floods, providing $65,641 in recovery assistance. Additionally, 343 infants were provided basic care items. Twenty-six individuals continued to live independently through assistance from Catholic Charities’ Representative Payee Program.

Also, 411 legal immigrants and refugees received services from Catholic Charities on their journey to citizenship.

As Stewards of Vocation, we are called by name because each one -- clergy, religious, lay person; married, single; adult, child -- has a personal vocation. Christian vocation entails the practice of stewardship. In addition, Christ calls each of us to be stewards of our personal vocations, which we receive from God. In the Diocese of Biloxi, we currently have eleven seminarians studying for priesthood and six men preparing for the permanent diaconate.

We are also obliged to be stewards of the Church -- collaborators and cooperators in continuing the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, which is the Church’s essential mission. This mission -- proclaiming and teaching, serving and sanctifying -- is our task. It is the personal responsibility of each one of us as stewards of the Church. All members of the Church have their own roles to play in carrying out its mission:

- Parents, who nurture their children in the light of faith;
- Parishioners, who work in concrete ways to make their parishes true communities of faith and vibrant sources of service to the larger community;
- All Catholics, who give generous support -- time, money, prayers, and personal service according to their circumstances -- to parish and diocesan programs and to the universal Church.

In our parishes, 807 were baptized, 183 were received into the Church, 450 youth received the Sacrament of Confirmation, 812 received First Holy Communion, 174 shared the Sacrament of Marriage, and 627 were laid to rest through Christian Burials.

This State of the Diocese is a snapshot of the work in our Diocese over the past year accomplished through God’s grace and your faithfulness and generosity to Him, and I am most grateful. Your gifts of prayer and financial support have been a tremendous blessing to enable our ministries which benefit so many people.

Once again these ministries are not possible without your loving support. As we continue in the Diocese of Biloxi to make disciples of all nations, baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teach all Jesus commanded, and trust that He is with us always, may we continue and grow the good works that bring ourselves and others closer to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

[Signature]
Catholic Foundation Report of Assets

2020-2021 Fiscal Year

Perpetual (Endowed) Funds $23,385,930.77
Rate of Return 24.3610%
Non-Perpetual Funds $5,025,481.03
Rate of Return 1.7211%
Total Trusts in Force 220

PARISH LIFE

53,666 Registered Parishioners
20,669 Families

SACRAMENTAL LIFE

Baptisms 807
First Communions 812
Confirations 653
Marriages 174
Christian Burials 627

DEANERIES OF THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF BILOXI

Northern Deanery

Bassfield
St. Peter Parish

Columbia
Holy Trinity Parish

Hattiesburg
Holy Rosary Parish

Laurel
Immaculate Conception Parish

Lucedale
St. Lucy Mission

Leakesville
Holy Trinity Mission

Lumberton
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish

Tylertown
St. Paul the Apostle Mission

Waynesboro
St. Bernadette Parish

Wiggins
St. Francis Xavier Parish

West Coast Deanery

Bay St. Louis
Our Lady of the Gulf Parish
St. Rose de Lima Parish

Clermont Harbor
St. Ann Parish

Dedeaux
Sacred Heart Parish

Kilm
Annunciation Parish

Pass Christian
Most Holy Trinity Parish

Pass Christian
Our Lady of Mercy Parish
Holy Family Parish

Pearlington
St. Joseph Chapel

Picayune
St. Charles Borromeo Parish

Waveland
St. Clare Parish

White Cypress
St. Matthew the Apostle Parish

Central Coast Deanery

Delmas
Our Lady of Chartres Mission

Gulfport
St. James Parish
St. John the Evangelist Parish
St. Joseph Parish
St. Therese Parish

Lizana
St. Ann Parish

Long Beach
St. Thomas the Apostle Parish

East Central Coast Deanery

Biloxi
Nativity B.V.M. Cathedral Parish
Our Lady of Fatima Parish
Our Mother of Sorrows Parish
Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos Parish
St. Mary Parish
St. Michael Parish
Vietnamese Martyrs Parish

D’Iberville
Sacred Heart Parish

East Coast Deanery

Gautier
St. Mary Parish
Hurley
St. Ann Mission
Latimer
Christ the King Mission
Moss Point
St. Joseph the Worker Parish
Ocean Springs
St. Alphonsus Parish
St. Elizabeth Seton Parish
Pascagoula
Our Lady of Victories Parish
Sacred Heart Parish
St. Peter the Apostle Parish
Vancleave
Holy Spirit Parish
**Office of Evangelization**

It’s been a wonderful year for the Office of Evangelization. Let’s take a peek at what has happened: we have introduced Bishop Kihneman’s guide *Missio Nostra (Our Mission)*.

- Back to school prayer retreat for Resurrection Catholic Elementary School
- Back to school prayer retreat for St. Charles Borromeo Elementary School
- *Ananias* and *Called & Gifted* formational workshops @ St. Thomas Aquinas, Hattiesburg
- Diocesan Staff Day on Discipleship @ St. Mary Parish, Gautier
- October Priest and Deacon Convocations
- Upcoming Leadership training February 4-5, 2022, @ Holy Family Parish, Pass Christian. Priests and their leadership teams are encouraged to attend.

The office will continue our awareness sessions on the guide *Missio Nostra* for all parishes that are interested as well as *Ananias* and *Called & Gifted* formational workshops.

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**43 Parishes**

**8 Missions**

**15 Schools (14 Diocesan Schools & 1 Private School)**

**2 Chapels**

**Catholic School Enrollment**

- **Total**: 4,113
  - Elementary: 2,456
  - Middle/High School: 1,657

**Parish Religious Education**

- **Total**: 2,496
  - Elementary School Age: 1,797
  - High School Age: 699
Motivated by the teachings of Christ, Catholic Charities of South Mississippi works to help our brothers and sisters in Christ, by providing the basic necessities of life and creating hope. By feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and serving those imprisoned by poverty, isolation, disaster or educational challenges, we serve according to the Gospel values of justice, mercy, and charity. We are called to offer kindness, respect, and dignity to all that we serve.

The Office of Communications is the voice of the Diocese of Biloxi and its shepherd, Bishop Louis F. Kihneman III. Through the diocesan newspaper, The Gulf Pine Catholic, we promote the good works of the Church being accomplished by our parishes, schools, entities, and organizations. The Office of Social Media was established in 2021 and administers the diocese’s and Bishop Kihneman’s social media accounts, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

The Office of Finance, being mindful of God’s blessings and gifts to His Church, is called to demonstrate discipleship by practicing good stewardship of the financial assets of God’s Church in the Diocese of Biloxi. It is our goal to always be faithful to the teachings of Christ and to be faithful in the stewardship of the gifts of His people in the ministry of the Church.

Our Catholic schools strive daily to create awareness to our call to be disciples of Jesus by immersing faculty, staff, and students, in the teachings and practice of our Catholic Faith. Faith-formation is at the core of the mission of all our schools and activities. Led by the Office of Catholic Schools offering workshops on forming Intentional Disciples, all members of the Catholic school leadership at each campus are consciously choosing to pray, learn, and show their faith through actions and to teach our students to “be not afraid” to be a witness to our Lord Jesus.

The Lord’s call to follow Him and become His disciples also calls us to be good stewards of the gifts that He bestows on each of us, as individuals, as well as the community of believers that is the Church. The Office of Stewardship and Development works to teach, and to put into practice the Spirituality of Stewardship that helps us in our journey towards being Intentional Disciple of the Lord Jesus.

The family is the domestic Church and the primary place of formation of values, consciences and discipleship in the Lord Jesus. The Office of Marriage & Family Life Ministries works to affirm, support, and strengthen all facets of family life by providing programs for spiritual enrichment, healing, and renewal so that each person in the family can draw closer to Christ and move deeper into discipleship with Him.

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The Office of Religious Education provides ongoing discipleship training for Catholic school religion teachers and parish catechetical leaders. We partner with our Catholic schools and parish leadership to help form our youth, young adults, and lay faithful in the ongoing exercise of having a well-formed conscience in our communities and in society as a whole.

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