

A photograph of a bishop performing a ritual. He is wearing a pink zucchetto, glasses, and yellow vestments over a red cassock. He is looking down at a golden chalice on the altar. Other chalices and a woven basket are also visible on the altar.

*"Taking the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He said the **blessing**, broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the crowds."*

MATTHEW 14:19



2023-2024
BISHOP'S
ANNUAL APPEAL
DIOCESE OF BATON ROUGE

TAKEN. BLESSED. BROKEN. GIVEN.



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

For five years I have had the privilege of calling Baton Rouge home. There are many aspects of South Louisiana I have come to love, but the greatest thing I have come to admire in my time here is a people unwavering in faith and boldly living the Gospel.

In considering this year's appeal, I was inspired by the Eucharistic Revival taking place in our national and local church. The deep devotion to the Blessed Sacrament running through our land has motivated me, and I have been drawn to Christ's actions of taking, blessing, breaking, and giving on multiple occasions in the Gospel. Like the ordinary bread taken and transformed into the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ at the Last Supper, God invites us to be transformed by the Gospel to play a unique role in His story of salvation.

In opening ourselves to conversion, we can see the ways God has blessed us and begin to share these blessings with those entrusted to our care. Oftentimes in the process, we realize we are broken — in health, in our relationships, and in our vocations. It is then that Jesus invites us to take up our crosses and unite them to our blessings and burdens for us to experience new life. Through this death to new life, we are given the grace to serve those around us and those we might never know in our community.

As we begin this new giving season for the Bishop's Annual Appeal, I ask you to prayerfully consider how the Lord is inviting you to be recognized in the taking, blessing, breaking, and giving of your resources in our local diocesan community.

Hope in the Lord

Most Reverend Michael G. Duca
Bishop of Baton Rouge

ABOUT THE *THEME*

"Taking the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He said the blessing, broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the crowds." **MATTHEW 14:19**



In order for a miracle to happen, Jesus must identify and choose the gift He desires to give to His people. Although His gifts of five loaves and two fish seem simple, Jesus takes them into His hands to prepare the offering. *Take some time in prayer to reflect on how God has chosen you and desires to do great things through you and for you.*



A blessing makes something sacred, setting it apart for a special purpose. With eyes toward heaven, Jesus turns His ordinary offering into something extraordinary. *Reflect on the many ways God has blessed you, big and small.*



Oftentimes, receiving blessings also makes us recognize our brokenness. Jesus uses this action of "breaking" multiple times in Scripture to reveal to us a deep truth about our humanity: our brokenness is not wasted, as this is the way others are able to receive His blessing. *Reflect on your brokenness and unite it with your blessings, remembering you are chosen by God.*



Not only does Jesus give of His miracle to His apostles but He also allows for His apostles to partake in this offering by giving the multiplied loaves and fish to the crowds. *How is God inviting you to give of your blessings to those in your family and in your community?*



Photos provided by The Diocese of Baton Rouge, Catholic Charities, Tyler Neil Photography, Collin Richie, Noel Marcantel Photography and St. Michael the Archangel High School.

SEMINARIAN FORMATION

The Diocese of Baton Rouge is blessed to have 10 men in seminarian formation: Huy, Joshua, Jeremy, Aeli, Grant, John, Carson, Austin, Trey, and Andrew. Join us in supporting these men who will become the priests who will bring us the sacraments, counsel us when we are in need of spiritual support, and encourage us in our walk toward sainthood.

FAITH-FULL FOOD PANTRY

Catholic Charities

One out of eight individuals within our diocesan boundaries (12 civil parishes) face food insecurity. By giving to the Bishop's Annual Appeal, you are helping Catholic Charities to feed those in need through their Faith-Full Food Pantry program.

ALL ARE WELCOME

A Ministry for Individuals with Special Needs

All Are Welcome is a support group that was established by parents of special needs children to provide resources, fellowship and liturgical /sacramental opportunities for persons with special needs and their families. By giving to the appeal, you are providing supplies and funds to support a growing ministry throughout our diocese.

CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Our diocesan Catholic schools excel in faith formation, community service and academic preparation. Under the belief that all students should have access to Catholic education, the Bishop's Annual Appeal directly supports students from across our diocese and their families through tuition assistance.

COLLEGE CAMPUS MINISTRY

The Bishop's Annual Appeal directly supports our three college campus ministries within the Diocese of Baton Rouge: Christ the King (LSU), MLK Student Center (Southern) and St. Albert the Great Student Center (Southeastern).



When you give to the Bishop's Annual Appeal, you are investing in the future of our local Church. The BAA serves the communities of our 64 church parishes, 29 diocesan schools and 10 seminarians, while also extending our outreach to shelter the homeless, care for the imprisoned and serve those with special needs.

The greatest way to support the Bishop's Annual Appeal is through prayer and financial support. Each gift, no matter the size, directly impacts our diocese!

64 
PARISHES

29 
SCHOOLS

10 
SEMINARIANS



WAYS TO GIVE



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FILL OUT A PLEDGE CARD.