



BISHOP REFLECTION

Dear Friends,

As we approach our Diocesan Sesquicentennial, we do well to pause and contemplate the Gospel of Luke 4:16-19 where Jesus reads from the Prophet Isaiah: "He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind to let the oppressed go free." Paul in Hebrews 11:8-10 recalls how Abraham, went out into the unknown, looking forward. Today Pope Francis continually calls on us to the risk of the encounter, bringing mercy and hope to the marginalized. "Hope," he says, "is the virtue of a heart that doesn't lock itself into darkness that does not dwell on the past, does not simply get by in the present, but is able to see a tomorrow." Considering these messages from Sacred Scripture and from our Holy Father, our beloved Diocese tirelessly proclaims the good news of the Gospel: Our Hope Jesus Christ.



Our ancestors whose dreams, works, and spiritual efforts built our Diocese—and upon whose shoulders we now stand upon—took the risk of Divine hope, coming to an unknown land, many searching for freedom from oppression: all were given the vision to see tomorrow. Your prayers and sacrificial gifts offered to the Diocesan Annual Appeal today fund the many great works that continue to flow from that Divine Hope bequeathed to us from our ancestors inspiring a new age for Faith!

I am grateful for your generosity and support for the Annual Appeal; and I humbly invite you to participate in this year's Sesquicentennial Diocesan Annual Appeal – *Stewards of Hope*.

God blessings be upon you,

+ William Patrick Callahan

Most Rev. William Patrick Callahan, Bishop of the Diocese of La Crosse

FAMILY

Catholic Charities assists with finding forever homes for children through Adoption Services programs. Last year the Diocese of La Crosse Catholic Charities supported 29 birth parents to live births, and 52 children found hope in their new forever families.



Steve and Emily share their roller coaster story of expectation, the disappointment, and the joy and hope of their journey to parenthood. The people of Catholic Charities Adoption program are the *Stewards of Hope*, every day to the family just like Steve, Emily, and Cosette. See their story at www.diolc.org/hope.

NEIGHBOR

"A home is more than merely a shelter; it is a foundation that allows one to focus on the future." The Diocese of La Crosse Catholic Charities works to transition the most chronic of homeless in our diocese from a life on the street; a life that is full of despair, shame, and volatility to one filled with hope, dignity, and stability.



Jack was atop of Marathon County's most chronic homeless person list. Today because of the Beyond Shelter program, Jack is now sober, fully employed and since promoted to supervisor, giving back by volunteering for a local jail ministry, and establishing "free neighborhood libraries." See his more of his story at www.diolc.org/hope.

FORMATION

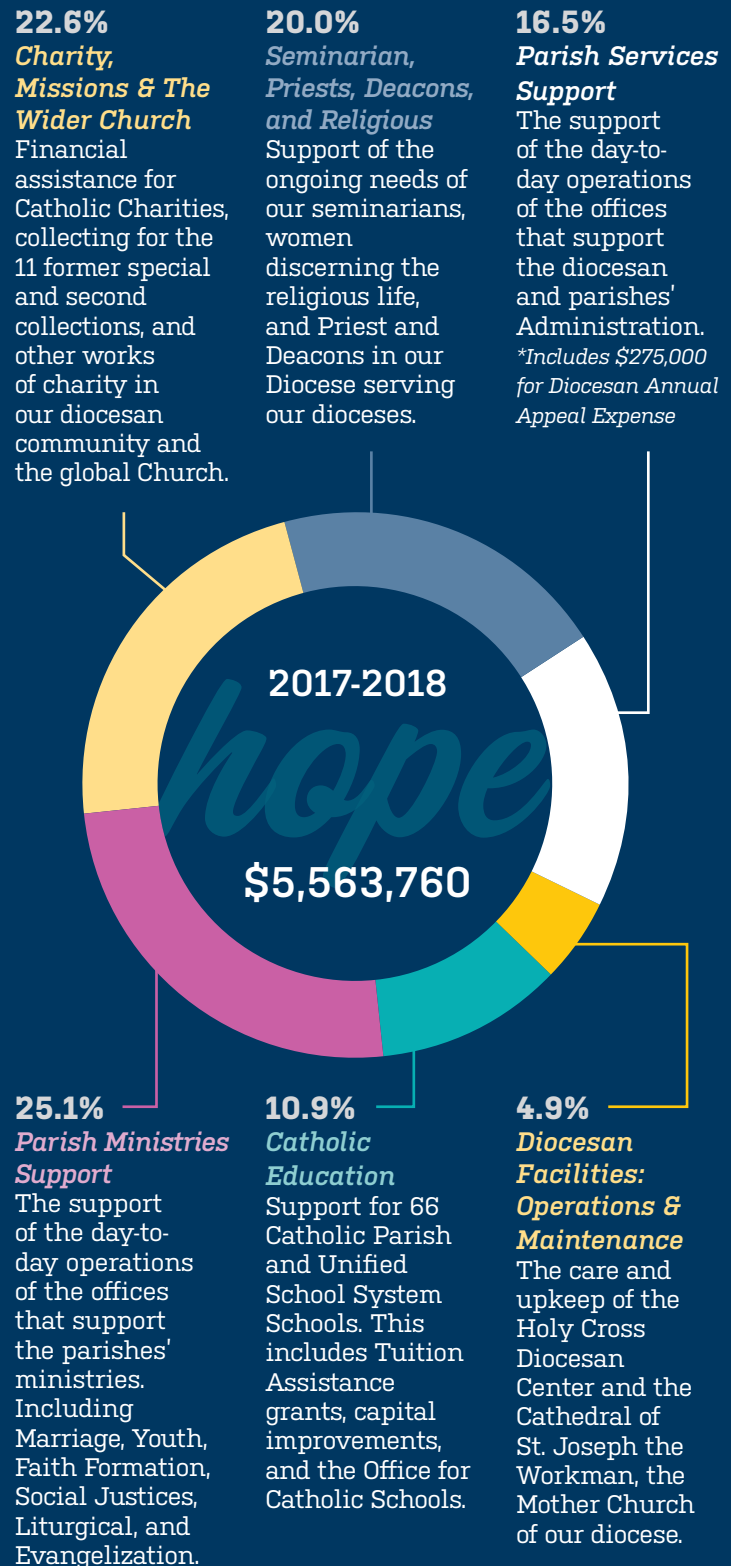
The largest single need that is supported by the Diocesan Annual Appeal is the support of our seminarian education and formation. Our diocese, to have the blessing of 29 men in seminarian education and formation, requires us to invest financially on average \$40,000 a year per man to support their needs. The annual appeal provides about half of the \$1.2 million needed to form good and holy men to the priesthood.



David is one of 29 seminarians in our diocese to undertake the discernment of the priesthood. David has overcome physical and spiritual obstacles on his journey to be a priest. His story is one that inspires hope in all who meet him. Hear his story and to learn more about the challenges and needs of all seminarians go to www.diolc.org/hope.



DIOCESAN CASE STATEMENT ALLOCATION



DIOCESAN ANNUAL APPEAL 2017-2018 PRAYER

We praise and thank You, Father, for all the gifts You have generously given to us through Your Son, Jesus Christ.

We pray Lord for the strength to serve You humbly in this life, doing good works in Your Name and being today's compassionate image of Your Holy Gospel. Thus, may we sow the seeds of hope for those who are weakened by a world of sadness and discouragement.

United as disciples in the love of Your Son, let us be reminded of our baptismal call to follow our Lord Jesus Christ as generous stewards in service to others as Mary our Holy Mother humbly did by listening to the angel's message.

Mary, our model of hope, sustain us in our faith as the Mother of hope for the community of believers. Encourage and guide us your children as we await the open door of His heavenly Kingdom.

We make our prayer through Christ our Lord.

Amen

Diocese of La Crosse



*"He has sent me to
proclaim release
to the captives and
recovery of sight to
the blind to let the
oppressed go free."*

Luke 4:18



REJOICE IN THE LORD
Always
— PHILIPPIANS 4:4



Stewards of
HOPE
DIOCESE OF LA CROSSE



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