

Dear Parishioners of Saint Mary's:

Each year, in addition to the annual collection for World Mission Sunday, all parishes are asked to join in the missionary spirit of the Church by participating in the Missionary Cooperative Appeal. Most of you are familiar with this: this is normally the weekend when a priest from another part of the world comes and talks at all the Masses about the special needs of his diocese. A second collection is taken up, and all of the money goes to that diocese or project. The beneficiary changes from year to year.

This year, because of COVID-19, the opportunity for priests to travel and make an appeal have been greatly curtailed. In order to continue our participation in the program, we have been directed by the Diocese to participate in one of Pope Francis' particular missionary endeavors. I have chosen the food program for the dioceses of the Pope's Missions. Please read below about the particular needs:

Food insecurity is an ever-looming threat in the 1,111 dioceses of the Pope's Missions, where poverty is problematic. In places like Uganda where people face food uncertainty and violence; in places like Mongolia where food is sought before the long winters; in places like Eswatini (Swaziland) where AIDS-orphaned, child-headed households have no parent to provide, leaving them in jeopardy of starvation; in places like Ethiopia where large amounts of people have been displaced. Bishop Seyoum Fransua is able to respond directly to those displaced persons fleeing violent conflict, drought/famine, and natural disasters (locust) – children and families now homeless and facing starvation. He is saving lives and revealing the Lord's compassion. With help through MISSIO, he is able to feed so many marginalized and hopeless – extending compassion and God's loving witness. Pope Francis reminds us to answer God's missionary call with, "Here I Am, Send Me." Send yourself out to those most in need, as Bishop Seyoum has answered, through a gift to them today! Your help during Mission Month supports missions in the world's most vulnerable communities. With your help, missionaries can provide food, clothing, education and health care to children and families in need.

Attached to this letter is the special "Mission Coop Appeal" envelope. Please use it to make a donation to this particular cause. We will collect these envelopes through Thanksgiving, and then send the money raised on to this particular missionary work. As always, God bless you for your generosity and concern for those in dire need. If you are not able to offer financial assistance, please assist our appeal with your prayers.

Fr. Doug Dietrich

Pastor, Saint Mary Church