



DIOCESE OF SAGINAW

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

March, 2021

Re: Annual Appeal to Support Michigan Migrant Farmworkers

Dear Pastors, Directors of Parish Life and Christian Service Coordinators,

During this season of Lent, we are called to exercise the traditional practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving as an opportunity to imitate Jesus in His love and care for God's people especially the poor, the vulnerable, the marginalized, and the stranger – the *anawim* among us. The *anawim* of the Old Testament were the poor of every sort, those of lowly status without earthly power. They depended totally on God for whatever they owned or needed. The Hebrew word *anawim* (*inwetan*) means those who are bowed down. Today, like the *anawim* of the Old Testament, migrant farmworkers are the vulnerable stranger among us, bowed down doing the essential work needed to help feed our nation.

Supporting our Migrant Ministry programs allows us the opportunity to answer the call to prayer, fasting and almsgiving this Lenten season. This pastoral effort is very important and not possible without the generous donations made by parishioners from throughout the diocese. We continue to have two locations to serve the migrants' material needs: All Saints Parish, St. Boniface Church, Bay City, and Our Lady Consolata Parish, St. Agatha Church, Gageton. Enclosed is a list of essential items we like to have to help provide for the needs of these migrant families with instruction on how to drop off donations or make a monetary gift.

In addition to the food pantries, we hope to move forward with plans for religious education activities for both children and adults, as well as the celebrations of Mass with the migrant farmworkers later this year. If someone from your community is interested in participating in Migrant Ministry, please have them contact Maria Coss in the Office of Hispanic Ministry at (989) 797-6646 or Deacon Librado Gayton at (989) 797-6604.

In supporting this ministry, let us never forget that God, who lavishly provides for our needs, calls us to sacrificial giving to continue his work. I am grateful for all you do to assist our brothers and sisters in need. May the Lord reward you for your kindness and generosity.

Peace and joy in Christ,

Most Rev. Robert D. Gruss
Bishop of Saginaw