

Bishop Mulhall's Letter Concerning Lenten Collection

Ash Wednesday 2010

The beginning of Lent gives me an opportunity to inform the faithful of the Diocese of the situation of the Lenten Collection of 2009 and the plans being made for the same collection in 2010 in the parishes throughout the Diocese.

Questions raised about 2009 Share Lent Collection

In Lent of 2009, as many of you will recall, information became available which raised questions regarding the work of certain partners of the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace in the area of abortion advocacy. Following a visit to Mexico by a delegation of the Bishops of Canada, these questions were addressed at length during their Plenary Meeting in October 2009. In light of the Encyclical Letter *Caritas in veritate* of Pope Benedict XVI and the fact that forty years had passed since the formation of Development and Peace, a broad study of the status and goals of Development and Peace was considered to be timely.

We find ourselves in a situation in which this work is under way but not yet complete and I have confidence that this work will bear fruit. The important point is that the Catholic Church in Canada will always need a vibrant and effective association to promote the work of development according to the profound vision outlined by the Holy Father in his recent letter.

2009 Share Lent Collection

For the past number of years, the offerings collected during Lent from the parishes of the Diocese have been used in the following manner: seventy five percent (75%) has been given to Development and Peace and twenty-five percent (25%) has been sent to other Missionary groups historically connected to the Diocese including the works of the Oblate Fathers, the Sisters of St. Joseph, the Grey Sisters and the Marist Brothers. Included in this 25% is the offering which the Diocese makes for the Holy Land.

The same percentages were used to distribute the 2009 Collection with the only difference being that the 75% allotment (\$114,960.00) was sent to Development and Peace to be forwarded to Caritas Haiti for immediate earthquake relief. Details of the funds dispensed are available at the Chancery Office.

2010 Lenten Collection

A change will be made for the 2010 Collection. Until such time as the work of evaluation mentioned above has been completed, a Development Collection will be

undertaken in the parishes. A portion will given to Development and Peace for emergency relief work, a portion will make up the Holy Land Collection and the remainder will be used for Missionary projects identified by the Diocese. A final decision on the distribution will be made after Easter and the information will be provided to each parish at that time.

Those parishioners who wish to make a contribution independently and directly to D&P for 2010 are encouraged to do so. Those who wish to contribute to a charity or development project of their own choosing are likewise encouraged to do so.

Haiti Relief Collection

I wish to express my appreciation to those who donated so generously to the parish collections for Haiti. The people of the Diocese of Pembroke have generously donated \$192,453.99 to assist those directly affected by this devastation.

My final encouragement to the faithful is that we support the generous alms given to the poor and suffering by our prayers and fasting. These are the profound gifts which Christ has given to us to live fully the days of preparation for the celebration of the Risen Lord at Easter. Let us keep one another in our prayers and know of my communion and solicitude for each of you in this Holy Season.

+ Michael Mulhall

Bishop of Pembroke