



January, 2010

My dear friends in Christ,

In the Gospels Jesus issues a call, at once full of grace and freedom and also full of urgency, to the first Apostles. He simply says: "Follow Me." That call initiates the original 12 into a deep intimacy with the Lord Jesus that will eventually prepare them for their role as Shepherds of the Church.

The call to follow Jesus is a universal call to every disciple. It is a call to all of us to respond with generosity and commitment to our baptism. It is a call to become holy as Christ is holy. His very image is present in us through our generous response to his invitation. Priests and the faithful collaborate together to build up the Church, to make room for the many activities and actions that allow the Church to make a concrete witness in the world.

Each year the Diocesan Services Fund (DSF) operates in our local Church of Galveston-Houston to help her carry out the task of teaching and sanctifying. Of the sixty-plus ministries under its umbrella, especially in our current economic realities, DSF brings the needed financial resources to carry out those same ministries.

The ministries help reinforce the call of following Jesus and preparing men for the priesthood. DSF also brings an answer to the hopes and needs of so many in our archdiocese. This year in the DSF film and in the brochure, we are featuring a few of the programs that receive support through DSF: Sacramental preparation classes, Special Youth Services for at risk-youth, disaster relief and food programs for the poorest among us, the Catholic Chaplain Corps providing comfort and strength to thousands of hospitalized Catholics and the Pope John XXIII retirement residence for our faithful priests at St. Dominic Village.

The response of discipleship to following Christ always involves stewardship for we discover that the Call of Christ brings many gifts to us. The gifts given are gifts to be shared, in time, talent and treasure. When you give of your resources for DSF you are answering the call of discipleship in a most concrete and effective way that benefits the common good of the whole archdiocese.

In this year for Priests, we salute the work of our presbyterate. We also recognize our own call to follow Jesus and to collaborate with our priests in the essential witness and ministry of the Kingdom of God among us. I invite you to be involved actively this year in our DSF summons and to be generous in your response.

Your faithful shepherd,

+Daniel Cardinal DiNardo

Daniel Cardinal DiNardo
Archbishop of Galveston-Houston

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