



DIocese OF GRAND RAPIDS

Office of the Bishop

November 3, 2009

My dear friends,

“Families are struggling. Faith is calling” is the theme of the 2009 Collection for the Catholic Campaign For Human Development (CCHD) which will be held **in our parishes** the weekend of **Nov 21-22**. The United States Census poverty figures reveal that the number of people currently in poverty in the United States is estimated at 39.8 million, almost 3 million more people than the previous year’s reading.

CCHD is the nation’s largest private source of funding for community programs that serve and empower poor families and individuals throughout our nation. **CCHD’s anti-poverty efforts are funded primarily through this annual parish collection.**

Our diocese retains 25% of our parish collections to fund neighborhood-level initiatives that benefit our local communities. One such outreach, which was a grantee last year, is Community encompass: Youth Entrepreneurship/Employment program (YEP!) in Muskegon. YEP! is a grassroots effort to nurture community leaders, employ at risk teens, and connect neighborhood seniors and youth in meaningful ways. Another grantee was Adult ESL/Computer Training at Holy Name of Jesus. The goal of this program is to improve English language skills so their large Hispanic population can participate more fully in their community.

The remaining 75% of the donations goes to the CCHD national office to further advance the mission of Catholic social teaching throughout the country by providing programs that empower low-income people to lift themselves from poverty and live in dignity.

Please join with the Catholic Campaign for Human Development to help break the cycle of poverty in our nation, starting in our neighborhoods, by generously participating in this year’s CCHD Collection.

I thank you in advance for your support of this important outreach of the church.

Sincerely yours in the Lord,

Most Reverend Walter A. Hurley
Bishop of Grand Rapids