



ARCHDIOCESE OF BOSTON
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BRAINTREE, MASSACHUSETTS 02184-3839

VICAR GENERAL
MODERATOR OF THE CURIA

March 19, 2009

Dear Monsignor/Father/Principal:

The current severe economic crisis is taking its toll globally, nationally, and locally. There is little indication this will be solved quickly. The impact on individuals and families, on careers and basic human needs, is evident throughout the Archdiocese. Jobs have been lost, demands on food pantries are escalating, foreclosures threaten the stability of family life, and the young and the elderly are simultaneously threatened.

We are sure we are stating the obvious in saying that an appropriate pastoral response to this crisis is needed. Many initiatives have begun in parishes and schools throughout the Archdiocese. We extend our appreciation to those who have shared with us their best practices. The complexity of the crisis and the diverse impact it has on different parishes makes a single plan on response difficult to design. As an initial step, at the Archdiocesan level we are submitting the following documents for your consideration:

- (1.) A copy of Fr. Erikson's March Pilot article which discusses the importance of responding to the spiritual and physical needs of those in need.
- (2.) A description of some of the best practices parishes and schools are already employing in response to this crisis. The best practices focus on both outreach measures, and cost-savings measures which free up more funds for outreach.
- (3.) A listing from Catholic Charities of locations and contact information for local food pantries.
- (4.) A document from the Planning Office for Urban Affairs with foreclosure prevention resources and information about the rights of homeowners should they be threatened with foreclosure.

In addition, we also plan to offer a series of regional meetings where priests can gather to share ideas and best practices as well as indicate how the Archdiocese can be of assistance to our parishes and schools. Father J. Bryan Hehir will coordinate these sessions.

Thank you for your ongoing efforts to provide support and care for all those who have been adversely affected by the current economic conditions. It is our hope that our efforts at networking and collaboration will bear great fruit in the weeks and months ahead and reflect our desire to share Christ's love through not only our words, but also our actions.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Very Rev. Richard M. Erikson, Ph.D., VG
Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia

Rev. J. Bryan Hehir
Secretary for Health and Social Services