**Sample Bishop’s Letter**

*May be read from the pulpit or inserted into the parish bulletins.*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Soon our diocese will take up The Catholic Relief Services Collection. Your support for this collection provides emergency assistance to victims of war and natural disasters; assists migrants and refugees who need housing, education, and specialized legal assistance; and supports travelers and others whose livelihoods require special pastoral support to access the sacraments. Among the most vulnerable of migrants are the victims of human trafficking.

Millions of men, women, and children worldwide are coerced or forced through human trafficking into commercial sex activities, labor, and slavery—abuses which the Holy Father has called “a crime against humanity.” As part of its mission to proclaim Christ’s salvation and to restore and promote the dignity of all persons, the Church is called to combat trafficking and to bring comfort and healing to its victims.

The Department of Migration and Refugee Services (MRS) of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops carries out this mission through two anti-trafficking, anti-slavery programs. The Become a Shepherd program is a parish-based awareness campaign that educates lay and religious leaders to recognize human trafficking and combat it through public engagement and advocacy at the community level. The second initiative, COMPASS (Coalition of Organizations and Ministries Promoting the Abolition of Slavery at Sea), is a global effort in which international Catholic and non-Catholic partners coordinate to identify and assist victims of modern slavery encountered in the commercial fishing and seafood-processing industries.

The invaluable work to assist these victims of abuse and injustice is supported by funds received through The Catholic Relief Services Collection. Your participation helps MRS and five other Catholic ministries to reveal Christ’s love to victims of trafficking, war, and natural disaster both around the world and here in the United States. Please prayerfully consider how you can support the collection this year. To learn more about the collection and the people who benefit, please visit [*www.usccb.org/catholic-relief*](http://www.usccb.org/catholic-relief).

Thank you for your generous support for The Catholic Relief Services Collection.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

(*Bishop name*, *title*, *and signature*)