

LOREN P.



BROWN

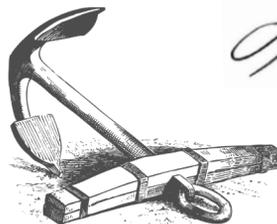
*Dear friends,*

The theme of this year's Annual Report is "Hope". In the teachings of Christianity, the virtue of Hope has great importance and significance; Christ is the unfailing Hope of all who believe in Him. It is no surprise that the Christian symbol of Hope is an anchor. The anchored cross, or mariner's cross, is a stylized cross in the shape of an anchor and symbolizes Hope, steadfastness, calm, and composure. St. Peter, St. Paul, and several of the early Fathers speak in this sense, but it was the Epistle to the Hebrews that first connects the idea of Hope with the symbol of the anchor. It is said that we have "Hope" set before us "as an anchor of the soul, sure and firm" (Hebrews 6:19-20).

This year has been riddled with obstacles and trials throughout the world. It could be considered by many as dark and bleak. Just as there can be no light without dark there can be no situation without Hope when you have Jesus by your side. As Catholics we are required to have faith and this year has tested that faith tremendously. However, I have seen such acts of kindness and generosity that it gives me Hope. You will read stories that show just how strong we are and how we, as Catholics, will remain strong and steadfast anchored to our faith. I am personally humbled by the donors who reacted and without hesitation to give to the Catholic Emergency Response Fund (CERF) for those needing assistance as a result of the pandemic. This fund then enabled us to quickly support 13 food pantries and 40 parishes in our Diocese. You will read about people, just like you, who gave others Hope in a very dark time.

In addition to the anchor you will also see other nautical symbols throughout the report, such as the lighthouse. Once Jesus said: "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house." (Matthew 5:14). Be a lighthouse. Be the bright light - the example, that others need to see through the darkness to find their way home to God. And when you are ready, we are here in your charitable planning to ensure light can shine and bring hope for our future generations.

Hope and peace to you,



A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Loren P. Brown".

PRESIDENT & CEO