

# STRENGTHENING THE CHURCH AT HOME

Dear Diocesan Director,

The Catholic Home Missions Appeal is an opportunity to help strengthen the Church in the United States, and we need your help. Over 40% of dioceses in the United States are considered mission territories, affecting over nine million Catholics. Through annual grants, Catholic Home Missions provides funding for seminary formation, lay leadership training, catechetical programs, Hispanic ministries, and other essential pastoral programs. Your support of this collection will help your neighbors here in the United States and strengthen the Church at home.

In the Pacific Ocean, between Guam and Hawaii, are the Marshall Islands, a collection of atolls and islands covering an area of 500,000 square miles. Given the great distance between these islands, travel is often difficult and communication is unreliable. The islands themselves do not have any local priests and have only one local permanent deacon and sister; and so, the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart provide for the pastoral and sacramental needs of the Islands. Additionally, many people move to the United States after high school, making it hard for the Catholic Church there to find men interested in joining the priesthood. Against those odds, the Marshall Islands welcomed with great joy a seminarian in 2014! Thanks to a grant from the Catholic Home Missions Appeal, they are able to afford to send him to seminary for his studies. Through his studies, he is a witness and example to other young men on the Islands.

You can make this year's appeal successful by encouraging parishes to use the posters, fliers, and bulletin announcements provided. **The most important thing you can do is to have your pastors speak about the appeal during Mass.** Additional materials are available at [www.usccb.org/home-missions](http://www.usccb.org/home-missions) under "Collection Resources." The national date for the Catholic Home Missions Appeal is the weekend of April 23-24, though your (arch)diocese may schedule it at a different time.

For more information, please contact me at 202-541-3365 or [bkennedy@usccb.org](mailto:bkennedy@usccb.org). We truly appreciate your support of the Catholic Home Missions Appeal, helping to **strengthen the Church at home.**

With gratitude,



Bevin Kennedy  
Assistant Director, Promotions, Office of National Collections



## CATHOLIC HOME MISSIONS APPEAL

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*Strengthening the Church at Home*