

**Sample Bishop’s Letter**

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

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As a diocese we will soon take up a collection for the Solidarity Fund for the Church in Africa. In his 2020 encyclical *On Fraternity and Social Friendship (Fratelli Tutti)*, Pope Francis wrote, “It is . . . urgent to continue to bear witness to the journey of encounter between the different Christian confessions” (no. 280). In this spirit of encounter and dialogue, in September 2020, the Southern African Catholic Bishops’ Conference organized a symposium on ecumenism, interreligious dialogue, and dialogue with secular culture. Participants including priests, men and women religious, and members of the laity from dioceses across South Africa and Botswana gathered for presentations and discussions with non-Catholic Christians and Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Bahai, and traditional African religion representatives. At the conclusion of the symposium, participants returned to their dioceses to share with their neighbors the message of openness and unifying dialogue.

This vital work of encounter was made possible through funding from the Solidarity Fund for the Church in Africa. Your support of the collection for the Solidarity Fund for the Church in Africa has been crucial to fostering tolerance and respect between neighbors, including those belonging to different faiths, which has contributed to interreligious cooperation and more peaceful communities in a number of places across Africa.

The Church in Africa needs your help to ensure that all the faithful have access to resources to help them grow in the faith. Please be generous to the Solidarity Fund through the collection offertory envelope or your parish’s e-offertory platform. [#iGiveCatholicTogether](https://usccb.igivecatholictogether.org/organizations/usccb-church-in-africa) also accepts funds for the collection. To learn more about the collection and whom it supports, visit *www*.*usccb*.*org/africa*.

Thank you and God bless.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

[*Bishop’s name*, *signature*, *title*, *diocese*]

For more information, please visit *www*.*usscb*.*org/africa*.