

Archdiocese of Santa Fe
4000 St. Joseph Place NW
Albuquerque, NM 87120

Telephone: 505-831-8120
Fax: 505-831-8101
Email: archbishop.office@archdiosf.org



OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

January 1, 2018

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The mandate for all Christian faithful to inherit the Kingdom is that we have participated in the Corporal Works of Mercy (Matthew 25: 31). Jesus directs us throughout the New Testament to reach out to the physically poor. This will be our ultimate judgment. We are also told in Psalm 136 that *“His mercy endures forever”*.

“Give Drink to the Thirsty” will be the 2018 Archdiocesan focus. To lack clean, drinkable water is to lack the very necessity of life. Without it we die, are unable to wash ourselves or our clothes, and are unable to grow the crops we need for nourishment. May we all have the heart and lifestyle to value the water we have, and to think of and assist those less fortunate. The message of Jesus Christ is for all people –it is as basic a need as water for all humankind.

Jesus says in John 7:37 *“If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink.”* Water is essential to our physical life on earth. The living water Jesus offers is essential to life eternal.

As Catholics water has other importance as well. Water is used in the sacrament of baptism – to cleanse us from sin. It is used at the Easter blessing to renew that baptism. At each Mass, water is added to wine at the altar of consecration.

The image of the New Mexico acequia (*as-sāquiya*) is a good reflection for our work this year. It shows respect for what God has provided us, reflects a necessary structure to support the work, and emphasizes community effort. For an acequia to continue to bring the needed water to everyone, it requires continuous maintenance, a “hands-on” approach, and a community working together.

I ask for your generous financial support of the 2018 Annual Catholic Appeal, “His Mercy Endures Forever...Give Drink to the Thirsty”, as a way for us to work together to continue our necessary work in our communities. Just as an acequia provides water to those who need it, the work of the ministries supported by ACA brings the needed thirst-quenching message of Christ to those most in need.

Sincerely yours in the Lord,

Most Reverend John C Wester
Archbishop of Santa Fe