Lent offers us a renewed opportunity to seek sincere conversion and to see, hear, think and act as Jesus. For the better part of two years, the Diocese of Des Moines has been praying and working through a process that involves such conversion. We have been calling this process strategic visioning. The ultimate goal of strategic visioning is to act on the promptings of the Holy Spirit to make us more evangelically focused and alive, more able to draw people into loving friendship with Christ by connecting with God and one another.

The new mission statement of the Diocese of Des Moines is *Sowing God’s Spirit*. We can appreciate as Iowans how God can take a tiny seed and with the benefit of a little good ground, transform that seed into a sturdy plant. The more life the seed takes on the more it is life giving. The Diocese identifies four fields of ministry in which we can *Sow God’s Spirit*: (1) inviting and welcoming people into communion, (2) preparing disciples for the domestic church, (3) drawing young people into deeper communion, and (4) cultivating a culture of servant leadership.

I invite you today to be a sower with the Diocese of Des Moines in these fields of ministry. The Annual Diocesan Appeal (ADA) provides more than half of the funds necessary to carry on *Sowing God’s Spirit* in southwest Iowa.

 The ADA is distinct from the Ignite! Campaign. If you will permit me to carry through the analogy, think of the ADA as the nutrients we add to our soil (the Diocese) each year; ensuring a high yield. Periodically there is a need to invest in resources that will create a higher stronger yield. The Ignite! Campaign is providing the added resources needed to help our diocese ensure a more fruitful harvest of God’s Spirit gifts in the abundant life of Christ’s Kingdom.

**Please prayerfully consider an offering by reviewing and returning the contribution card.** Your gift, no matter the size, is greatly needed and heartily appreciated.

To learn more about the impact of your gift, and to give online you can visit dmdiocese.org/giving.

May our collective work in the fields bear a fruitful harvest for the Lord!

Faithfully in Christ,

Most Rev. William M. Joensen, Ph.D.

Bishop of Des Moines