



January 24, 2011

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

The Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe will be taken up on March 9 in our diocese. This collection supports essential unmet pastoral needs in Central and Eastern Europe and areas of Asia formerly under Soviet control. Our assistance is vital to the growth and strength of the Church in these regions.

The collection funds scholarships given to the region's students for graduate education. One such former student is Father Yurko Kolasa, who was raised in the Soviet Union. Father Kolasa is now a prefect of the training program for priests, seminarians and religious at the International Theological Institute near Vienna, Austria; he is also the developer of a marriage preparation program that has had an impact on the success rate of marriage in Ukraine. Father Kolasa's marriage preparation program has been so successful that it is being used as a model for the Romanian Greek Catholic Church and throughout Austria.

The pastoral projects and scholarships supported by the collection build the capacity of the Church in Central and Eastern Europe by creating leaders and developing programs that will continue to encourage self-sufficiency. For additional information on the Church in Central and Eastern Europe and the projects funded by the collection, you may wish to visit www.usccb.org/nationalcollections.

I prayerfully ask that you please be generous in your support of the Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe where great needs remain. Your contribution will truly make a difference. Thank you for your consideration; may God bless you and those who are dear to you.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Edward K. Braxton".

The Most Reverend Edward K. Braxton
Bishop of Belleville

Please read this letter or print a synopsis of it in your bulletin and make appropriate announcements on the weekend of March 5-6, 2011. The collection is to be taken up on Ash Wednesday, March 9, 2011.

Envelopes for this collection should be in your parishioners' regular envelope packets. Please send the proceeds of this collection to the Chancery no later than Friday, April 29, 2011. Please make the check payable to "Catholic Diocese of Belleville" and indicate "Central and Eastern Europe" in the lower left-hand corner of the check. Your cooperation in forwarding the check by the requested date is appreciated.

Thank you so much for your cooperation and assistance.