



DIOCESE OF BELLEVILLE

January 27, 2010

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

In a small village called Kapshagai in Kazakhstan, the Catholic Church supports a series of shelter homes for children whose families face challenges too difficult to manage. The Church provides these children with shelter, food, clothing, vocational training, companionship and love on behalf of their family members in the hope that they can one day resume care. What started as one building housing 20 children in 2001 has become 10 buildings today where children and young people, including university students, receive housing and counseling.

The Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe supports essential pastoral needs of the region, such as seminary formation and parish maintenance. The Collection also helps with social and charitable works that the local Church does not have the capacity to support, such as the shelter homes for the children of Kapshagai.

Because of the fall of communism and the entrance of many central and eastern European countries into the European Union, many people think that the needs of the region have been met. However, many parishes struggle in places where Catholics are in the minority, lack proper places to worship and the ability to provide pastoral care, and, most importantly, cannot support themselves. On behalf of the struggling parishes of the Church in central and eastern Europe, we ask for your support of the upcoming Collection. Through it we can give hope to the future by helping the Church to grow in faith and nurturing its children.

Please be as generous as you are able in your parish Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe. Let us stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters across the globe in central and eastern Europe and parts of Asia which were once under Soviet control and where great needs remain.

Sincerely and appreciatively yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Edward K. Braxton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

The Most Reverend Edward K. Braxton
Bishop of Belleville

Please read this letter, print a synopsis of it or the suggested announcement below in your bulletin and make appropriate announcements on the weekend of February 13-14, 2010. The collection is to be taken up on Ash Wednesday, February 17, 2010.

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 9, 2010. 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.

Suggested Bulletin Insert – Weekend of February 13-14

On Ash Wednesday we will take up the Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe. The Church in this region continues to have great needs for its essential pastoral work. Your donations invest in future generations of Catholics...a gift of faith to the future. Please be generous in our parish collection to support our sisters and brothers throughout central and eastern Europe and parts of Asia that were once under Soviet control.