June 22, 2015

Dear Member of Congress:

Pope Francis will make his first visit to the United States this September – including an address to Congress. The World Meeting of Families (WMOF) Hunger and Homelessness Committee is working to prepare for the Pope’s presence in Philadelphia by focusing attention on the struggles of our fellow citizens who are poor and suffering. We believe it is urgent that we seize this moment and respond to Pope Francis’ challenge that we hear the cry of poverty in our nation.

Included with this letter is “A Time for Mercy and Justice: Pope Francis and the Pursuit of the Common Good in the United States.” This was developed through months of consultations with organizations and advocates from around the country. We have sought to lay out a vision of a just and compassionate society, in the spirit of the Holy Father’s challenge. Such a society would include the following goals:

- Create more affordable housing to prevent and end homelessness.
- No one should be hungry: improve food and nutrition for children, elderly persons, and families, in solidarity with the international Caritas movement.
- Promote full employment and ensure that incomes are adequate for people to meet their basic needs, including food and shelter.
- Reform the criminal justice system to give people meaningful opportunities to reclaim their lives.

We urge you, as a public servant, to join us in furthering the Pope’s challenge to reflect upon how best to build a society truly rooted in mercy and justice. We hope you will act with leadership and courage to find new and creative bipartisan solutions that move us further toward the American promise of liberty and justice for all.

Sincerely,

Most Reverend Charles J. Chaput
O.F.M. Cap.
Archbishop of Philadelphia

S. Mary Scullion, RSM
Chair, WMOF Hunger and Homelessness Committee

WMOF Hunger and Homelessness Committee
C/o Project HOME, 1515 Fairmount Avenue, Philadelphia PA 19130 215-232-7272 ext. 3047

www.mercyandjustice.org