



The Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts

The Right Reverend Roy F. Cederholm, Jr.

Dear Holy Partners:

“Mission is not something we plan, but is a response to a need.” I heard this from Archdeacon Dennis in New Orleans, and it helps me understand how we, the Diocese of Massachusetts, are so closely connected in partnership with the people of the Gulf Coast.

The world responded immediately to Katrina and we did too. Within days we sent prayers and offerings of mission trips and treasure. But the more time we spent in the region, the more we understood that there are deeper, longer lasting needs that called for a different response.

This realization brought forth the ministry of the Rev. Jane Bearden, our Gulf Coast Priest-in-Residence. After less than a year, the impact of this ministry both in the Gulf Coast and in Massachusetts has exceeded our wildest expectations. As our person on the ground, Jane is coordinating the ongoing flow of mission trips into the region. As an associate for Church of the Redeemer in Biloxi, she is “family to us now” according to the senior warden. And as illustrated by the enclosed *Boston Globe* article, she has become a vital part of the faith-based outreach programs in the greater Biloxi area and is now extending this work into New Orleans. She has demonstrated the benefits and special outreach ministry that only full time presence in the region can give.

We need your help to secure this ministry through the end of 2008! More than thirty parishes made the first year of the Priest-in-Residence program possible – now is the time for all of us to work within our parishes and come forward with the financial means to see this vital ministry through.

Please join me Friday night, November 2, for a New Orleans style All Saints celebration on behalf of the Gulf Coast ministry! This event – without a doubt, your best ticket for dinner that night – will be a great opportunity for fun, fellowship, and authentic New Orleans jazz!

What is your parish’s path to partnership? As Bishop it is my pleasure to ask each parish to take a **special offering** the weekend before Convention **on behalf of the Gulf Coast Partnership** and to bring this offering with you on Friday night. In addition, I am very grateful for all the parishes who are also dedicating portions of your fall festival proceeds, outreach committee grants and other parish contributions for the Gulf Coast.

Be sure to buy your dinner ticket and rally your parish around this special partnership! Come to convention ready to share your stories and support for the Gulf Coast Partnership!

Peace,

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