



DIOCESE OF LINCOLN

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

July 17, 2015

Reverend and dear Monsignor/Father,

Greetings in the Lord. I am writing to encourage your support of the International Missionary Foundation (IMF), a Catholic apostolate directed by Mr. Joseph Williams, a former FOCUS missionary, whom I know well. On the occasion of writing to you, the words of Saint John Paul II's Lenten message of 1998 come to mind, namely:

“When with Christ the Church serves the person in need, she opens hearts to a new hope going beyond evil and suffering, beyond sin and death. In fact, the evils which afflict us, the vastness of problems, the immense number of those who suffer, represent an obstacle which cannot be humanly overcome. The Church offers its assistance, also of a material nature, to relieve these difficulties. At the same time the Church knows that she is able and must give much more. That what is expected from her, above all else, is a word of hope.”

Brothers, as missionary disciples we are called to bring the joy and hope of the Gospel to those who are in need. The IMF provides us with such an opportunity. The Parish2Parish mission program connects Catholic parishes in the developing world with our own parish families in the United States. The commitment to prayer, financial support, parish development and mission trips can last from one to three years with the organizational assistance of IMF.

I fully support the missionary efforts of the IMF and encourage you to prayerfully consider the possibility of your parish's participation in the Parish2Parish program. It would provide your flock with opportunities to reach out to the poor and grow spiritually through works of mercy. Perhaps it would fit well in your pastoral plan for the upcoming Year of Mercy.

With my blessing and every prayerful good wish for you and your parishioners, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

The Most Rev. James D. Conley
Bishop of Lincoln