



Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ:

*Care and Share* has been taking place in Eastern Montana for 40 years. It began as a means to support diocesan ministries fairly as well as meeting the external financial responsibilities the Diocese shares as a member of the universal church. It has retained this basic purpose for all of its years of existence. By contributing to *Care and Share* over the years, faithful Catholics like you have participated in evangelization efforts reaching far beyond their parish boundaries.

Evangelization is what we, as members of the Church, must be about. Evangelization, as Pope Paul VI affirmed, is the “essential mission of the Church.” While there are specific ways in which each of us evangelizes personally, there is also a responsibility to do so corporately. And the only way that the Church can effectively evangelize, either separately as individuals or corporately as a body, is through our stewardship of the gifts we have received from God. This is what I ask you to consider as you reflect upon and pray about your gift to the 2010 Care and Share.

While some people may think of *Care and Share* as a tax on their parish, it is rather an opportunity to exercise discipleship. When we share our gifts, we are also sharing in the wider mission of the Church throughout Eastern Montana and beyond.

At the heart of discipleship is the cross of Christ, the sign of God’s total giving of himself for our salvation in Christ. When we participate in *Care and Share*, we are giving back to God a fraction of the gift we have received from him.

As people of God throughout Eastern Montana, you have responded generously over the years. Like all communities, the Church continues to grow, and develop as we seek to respond to the needs of God’s people and therefore continue to need your generosity and support. We are a small missionary Diocese, small as the mustard seed, and like the mustard seed, capable of growth into a mighty tree offering shade, comfort, and safety for our entire diocesan family. My prayers are with each of you as I ask you to reflect on the words of Pope Paul VI, and to consider your Care and Share offering this year, combining your gifts with mine for the mission of this evangelizing diocesan Church.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael W. Warfel".

Michael W. Warfel  
Bishop of Great Falls-Billings