COMMENT FROM BISHOP PETER INGHAM

God loves a cheerful giver (2 Cor 9:7)

I heartily support the Catholic Education Office’s Workplace Giving Programme as it expresses in a practical way what Pope Benedict speaks of in his first Encyclical, “God is Love” (31).

Following the example given in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 15: 11-24), Christian charity is, first of all, the simple response to immediate needs and specific situations: feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, caring for and healing the sick, visiting those in prison, etc. (Mt 25:35-36)

The Pope goes on to say that we:

… led to that encounter with God in Christ, which awakens (our) love and opens (our) spirit to others. As a result, love of neighbour (becomes) a consequence, deriving from (our) faith, a faith which becomes active through love. (cf Gal 5:6).

The programme of Jesus is a heart which sees. This heart sees where love is needed and acts accordingly.

Because God first gave to us so many gifts – life, faith, love and resources – we need to share our time, our talent, our faith, and our treasure as good stewards of what we have received. God’s greatest gift to us was his Son, Jesus, whose salvation we inherit by our Baptism. Our Confirmation empowers us to share and give witness to our faith in Jesus. Yet Jesus said “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35) and “The amount you measure out is the amount you will be given back.” (Lk 6:38)

St Paul wants us to remember: “Thin sowing means thin reaping; the more you sow the more you reap! Each one should give what he has decided in his own mind, not grudgingly or because he is made to, for God loves a cheerful giver. And there is no limit to the blessings which God can send you – he will make sure that you will always have all you need for yourselves in every possible circumstance, and still have something to spare for all sorts of good works. As Scripture says, He was free in almsgiving, and gave to the poor: his good deeds will never be forgotten. (2 Cor 9:7-9)

May we make a difference through our workplace giving.

Blessings and best wishes

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