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Gratitude and Call to Action

*In Thanksgiving statement, Catholic bishops renew call to prayer,
service*

On the first anniversary of their pastoral letter on poverty – “[Who Is My Neighbor?](#)” – the Catholic bishops of Washington state called on “Christians and all people of good will” to show care and concern for those in need.

“[Who Is My Neighbor?](#)” emphasized the need for prayer and action to address the hardships associated with poverty that afflict people in every community of our state. With Thanksgiving Day 2017 approaching, the bishops renewed their call for compassion and works of mercy.

“As Christians and all people of good will gather with family and friends during this national holiday, it also is an appropriate occasion to turn our gaze toward those who are experiencing poverty, hunger and homelessness,” the bishops said in their Thanksgiving statement.

“We have a lot to be grateful for in Washington,” said Archbishop J. Peter Sartain of Seattle. “We also have many neighbors – our brothers and sisters – struggling simply to acquire the basic necessities of life for their families.”

In their [statement](#) the bishops— Archbishop Sartain and Auxiliary Bishops Eusebio Elizondo and Daniel Mueggenborg of Seattle, Bishop Thomas Daly of Spokane and Bishop Joseph Tyson of Yakima — also called attention to the first-ever World Day of the Poor on Sunday, Nov. 19, which was established earlier this year by Pope Francis.

“The establishment of the World Day of the Poor is a great gift to the church,” Bishop Tyson said. “The Holy Father reminds us that we must take concrete action and seek personal encounters with those living in poverty.”

In his [statement](#) establishing the first World Day of the Poor, Pope Francis called on Christians “to embrace the culture of encounter.” “At the same time,” he said, “everyone, independent of religious affiliation, is invited to openness and sharing with the poor through concrete signs of solidarity and fraternity.”

“Such interactions with our brothers and sisters who lack the basic necessities of life are an especially appropriate way to celebrate our many blessings on Thanksgiving Day and every day,” Bishop Daly said. “As we pause to give thanks, we urge Christians and all people to generously assist those in need and to make sharing a way of life.”

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