



December 2, 2009

Dear Friends in Christ,

Grace and peace to you from our Lord Jesus Christ.

At Diocesan Convention, I challenged us to undertake a bold and courageous plan to make primary education a reality for 40,000 children next year. Did you know that one in four adults cannot read or write? Or that two thirds of them are women? Currently, 75 million children are denied basic education because their families cannot afford to purchase the required uniforms or pay school fees. The second Millennium Development Goal – to ensure universal primary education – would cost \$10 billion dollars a year. Americans spend \$20 billion a year on ice cream! At convention, I challenged every parish and mission in the Diocese of Chicago to assist me in accomplishing MDG #2 by participating in The 2009 Bishop's Primary Education Challenge.

This year, gift cards will be made available for purchase through the deacons of the Diocese of Chicago. Every card sold at \$12 will ensure that one child will have the required uniform necessary to attend school. Together, we can provide uniforms and fees to send 40,000 children to school next year. Each parish will have gift cards available for purchase. Please designate one person from your parish to coordinate this effort of card sales and parish education on MDG #2. Please get that person's contact information to Liz Meade, chair of the Diocesan Deacons' Council, at [galameade@aol.com](mailto:galameade@aol.com) by December 14.

All training and materials will be provided. The Bishop's Challenge Representative will distribute gift cards to donors, and see that the monies collected are documented and disbursed in a timely manner. Monies collected will be sent to Episcopal Relief and Development in February, 2010.

As we head into gift-giving season, please join me as we challenge each other to give the gift of education this year. Imagine the surprise of opening a card on Christmas morning to see that you have given a child the gift of education for a year. Together, we can educate 40,000 children, and do our part to realize the Millennium Development Goals.

Yours in Christ,

The Rt. Rev. Jeffrey D. Lee,  
Bishop of Chicago