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**Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,**

The magnificent image that graces this year's CCS Week message is entitled Madonna of the Fir Tree. In it, we see the tenderness and care with which Mary holds the Christ child and the strength and assurance the child returns as he reaches out to her. Each life changed by the other.

We, too, will know the strength and assurance of Christ when we reach out to those in need around us. You may not personally be able to give shelter to a homeless family, care for a troubled child, or help an unemployed man find a job, but through your gifts to Catholic Community Services, you do just that.

These are times that test who we are and what we believe. As people of faith, we should seize this opportunity to redefine what we mean by prosperity, changing it to a definition that makes the lives and dignity of poor families and vulnerable people a central priority.

I pray that the love of the Holy Family will touch your hearts this Advent season with grace and compassion for all the children and families we are privileged to serve. Thank you for helping to make miracles happen. With warmest regards and wishes, I remain,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ *Alex J. Brunett*

Most Rev. Alex J. Brunett  
Archbishop of Seattle

P.S. This year, requests for food and shelter have tripled. Please do all you can to help. Your generosity directly supports the programs and services in your area.

