



November 13, 2014

Dear Friends:

Welcome to this website created for families. We are unveiling it just after the first of a two-part synod called by Pope Francis to discuss pastoral challenges to the family. Synods of this kind have happened only twice in the past 50 years. Our own diocese contributed to this work by submitting our responses to questions posed by the Holy Father earlier this year. Hundreds of people in the Diocese of Erie filled out the survey posted on the diocesan website; perhaps you were one of them. The synod was a meaningful and historic event, but it was only the beginning. Now, much work needs to be done before the next synod in October of 2015.

The family is an essential cell of society and the church. We need each other and without that connection we could not survive. In other words, families *always* matter. Thus, I invite you to join me for a year of prayer, exploration and discovery during which we can recognize the significance of the events occurring in the life of the church and open ourselves to the continued graces of the Holy Spirit.

Throughout the next 12 months, this website will serve as a hub where new and meaningful information for families of all ages and stages will be made available to strengthen our bonds as family and as church. As you may know, our neighbors in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia are hosting the World Meeting of Families in September of 2015. Links to details about this upcoming world event will also be accessible from this site.

I look forward to an exciting year of study and growth for families in our diocese. May God continue to bless you and your family.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lawrence T. Persico".

The Most Reverend Lawrence T. Persico, JCL
Bishop of Erie