



May 1, 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As members of the worldwide Catholic family, we can be proud of the Church's outreach to our fellow brothers and sisters of the human family. Believers and non-believers alike know first-hand of the generosity of Catholics the world over. In the Gospel, Jesus teaches us to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and shelter the homeless, wherever and whomever they may be. The Church has been doing this work for centuries, and today I ask your assistance that it may continue.

The annual Collection for International Needs, to be taken up in the Diocese of Erie on the weekend of May 20-21, offers a concrete way for us to reach out to those who live in distant lands. It is actually a combination of three national collections.

- It provides aid to Catholics in the **Church in Central and Eastern Europe** to help build churches; train and educate seminarians, clergy, and lay leaders; publish Catholic newspapers; support orphanages; and support evangelization among children, youth, and adults.
- It also helps all people, regardless of race, creed, or nation through **Catholic Relief Services**, providing for the victims of war and natural disasters, aiding the Church suffering under persecution, alleviating poverty, and educating the poor. Catholic Relief Services has been particularly active in areas of the world recently afflicted by earthquake and tsunami disasters.
- It provides needed assistance to the **Church in Africa**, a rapidly growing and vibrant Church which is rich in vitality but poor in resources.

I ask your generous response to the Collection for International Needs on May 20-21. Just as important is your prayer for those in need, whether here in the Diocese of Erie, or across the globe. Please know that your gift is appreciated. You and your family remain in my prayer.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+Lawrence T. Persico

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