



April 17, 2024

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

Ever since our Lord's admonition to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and shelter the homeless, wherever and whomever they may be, the Church has been reaching out to those in need. Today I would like to ask you to join me, as members of the worldwide Catholic family, in helping the Church to continue to provide for our needy brothers and sisters throughout the world by giving generously to the **International Needs Collection** to be taken up in the Diocese of Erie the weekend of May 18-19.

This annual collection offers a concrete way for us to reach out to those who live in lands and cultures far from our own. It is a combination of three collections:

- The **Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe** which helps build churches; train and educate seminarians, clergy, and lay leaders; publish Catholic newspapers; support orphanages; and support evangelization among children, youth, and adults;
- The **Catholic Relief Services Collection** which helps all people, regardless of race, creed, or nation, providing for the victims of war and natural disasters, aiding the Church suffering under persecution, alleviating poverty, and educating the poor; and
- The **Support for the Church in Africa** collection, which provides for the rapidly growing and vibrant Church on that continent.

Please give generously to the International Needs Collection on May 18-19 and, just as importantly, please include those in need in your prayers. Be assured of my prayers for you and your families and parishes.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+Lawrence T. Persico

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



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