



Office for Divine Worship Newsletter

Volume III, Issue I

December 2025

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Bishop Persico Publishes Prayer for a New Bishop

With the celebration of his 75th birthday, Bishop Persico published a prayer for a new bishop for the Diocese of Erie and directs its use beginning the First Sunday of Advent, November 30, 2025.

O Almighty God,
Pour forth the Holy Spirit upon the Holy Father
and those who assist him
in the discernment of our new bishop.
May the one chosen have the strength
to be a compassionate leader,
who models humility and joy.
Grant him the wisdom of Solomon,
the courage of the apostles,
and the tenderness of your Son, the Good Shepherd.

We also pray for the Diocese of Erie
that he is called to serve.
May we welcome him with open hearts
and work with him in a spirit of synodality,
called to listen, collaborate, and build unity.

Through the intercession of the
Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church,
St. Joseph, the protector of the Church,
and St. Patrick, the patron of our diocese,
may we journey the path of life
with an unwavering focus
on the hope we have in Christ.

For he lives and reigns forever and ever.
Amen.

Inside this issue:

<i>Dilexi Te, cont'd.</i>	2
<i>Reminder: Placement of the Nativity Scene</i>	2
<i>Ritual Editions of Anointing of the Sick</i>	2
<i>Jubilee of Prisoners</i>	3
<i>December 2025 Liturgical Calendar</i>	3-4
<i>Jubilee 2025 Information</i>	5
<i>Eucharistic Congress 2029</i>	6
<i>Colds and Flu</i>	6
<i>Workshops for Liturgical Ministers</i>	6
<i>Copyrights</i>	6

Dilexi Te Apostolic Exhortation of the Holy Father Leo XIV

The following are excerpts from *Dilexi Te* (DT), which speaks about the relationship between liturgy and serving the poor:

Writing about the assembly gathered in prayer on the first day of the week, [Saint Justin] underscored that at the heart of the Christian liturgy, it is not possible to separate the worship of God from concern for the poor. Consequently, at a certain point in the celebration: “they who are well-to-do, and willing, give what each thinks fit; and what is collected is deposited with the president, who succors the orphans and widows, and those who, through sickness or any other cause, are in want, and those who are in bonds, and the strangers sojourning among us, and in a word takes care of all who are in need.” This demonstrates that the nascent Church did not separate belief from social action: faith without witness through concrete actions was considered dead, as Saint James taught us (cf. 2:17) (DT, #40).

In [Saint John Chrysostom’s] homilies, he exhorted the faithful to recognize Christ in the needy: “Do you wish to honor the body of Christ? Do not allow it to be despised in its members, that is, in the poor, who have no clothes to cover themselves. Do not honor Christ’s body here in church with silk fabrics, while outside you neglect it when it suffers from cold and nakedness... [The body of Christ on the altar] does not need cloaks, but pure souls; while the one outside needs much care. Let us therefore learn to think of and honor Christ as he wishes. For the most pleasing honor we can give to the one we want to venerate is that of doing what he himself desires, not what we devise... So you too, give him the honor he has commanded, and let the poor benefit from your riches. God does not need golden vessels, but golden souls.”

Dilexi Te, cont'd.

Affirming with crystal clarity that, if the faithful do not encounter Christ in the poor who stand at the door, they will not be able to worship him even at the altar, he continues: "What advantage does Christ gain if the sacrificial table is laden with golden vessels, while he himself dies of hunger in the person of the poor? Feed the hungry first, and only afterward adorn the altar with what remains." He understood the Eucharist, therefore, as a sacramental expression of the charity and justice that both preceded and accompanied it. That same charity and justice should perpetuate the Eucharist through love and attention to the poor (DT, #41).

Consequently, charity is not optional but a requirement of true worship. Chrysostom vehemently denounced excessive wealth connected with indifference for the poor. The attention due to them, rather than a mere social requirement, is a condition for salvation, which gives unjust wealth a condemnatory weight. "It is very cold and the poor man lies in rags, dying, freezing, shivering, with an appearance and clothing that should move you. You, however, red in the face and drunk, pass by. And how do you expect God to deliver you from misfortune?... You often adorn an unfeeling corpse, which no longer understands honor, with many varied and gilded garments. Yet you despise the one who feels pain, who is torn apart, tortured, tormented by hunger and cold." This profound sense of social justice leads him to affirm that "not giving to the poor is stealing from them, defrauding them of their lives, because what we have belongs to them" (DT, #41).

Reminder: Placement of the Nativity Scene in Church

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ, pastors and liturgy planners are reminded that if a Nativity scene is displayed inside the church, it should not be placed in the sanctuary (presbyterium). The Book of Blessings instructs that the manger be set in a location suitable for prayer and devotion and easily accessible to the faithful (nos. 1542–1544). The scene should never obscure the altar, ambo, or presider's chair, but instead invite quiet reflection on the mystery of the Incarnation. Whether inside the church or outdoors, the crèche is meant to inspire prayer and wonder, helping all who see it draw closer to Christ, whose humble birth we joyfully proclaim.

Ritual Editions of Anointing of the Sick to Be Released January 1, 2026

Five publishers are producing a total of eleven ritual editions of the *Order of the Anointing of the Sick and of their Pastoral Care and Ritual de la Unción de los enfermos y de su atención* pastoral for liturgical use in the United States. Seven of the books are in English, one is in Spanish, and three are bilingual editions. Three pocket size editions are softcover, while the others are hardcover.

Presales for all editions are currently underway, and books may be distributed and sold as of January 1, 2026. As a reminder, first-use of the new Anointing rite begins on February 11, 2026, the memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes and annual World Day of the Sick, with mandatory use as of Easter Sunday, April 5, 2026.

Information on the available ritual editions is summarized for the benefit of our readers:

Catholic Book Publishing Corp. (CatholicBookPublishing.com, 877-228-2665)

English, regular size: 7¼" × 10¼", 240 pgs., \$34

English, pocket size: 4" × 6¼", 336 pgs., \$25

Bilingual, pocket size: 4" × 6¼", 656 pgs., \$29

Liturgical Press (LitPress.org, 800-858-5450)

English: 6" × 9", 304 pgs., \$59.95

Spanish: 6" × 9", 288 pgs., \$59.95

Liturgy Training Publications (LTP.org, 800-933-1800)

English: 5¼" × 8", 336 pgs., \$48

Bilingual: 5¼" × 8", 672 pgs., \$68

Magnificat (bookstore.Magnificat.net, 970-416-6670)

English, regular size: 5" × 7¾", 280 pgs., \$29.95

English, pocket size: 4¼" × 5½", 280 pgs., \$24.95

Midwest Theological Forum (TheologicalForum.org, 630-541-8519)

English: 7.18" × 10¼", 206 pgs., \$49.95

Bilingual: 7.18" × 10¼", 394 pgs., \$69.95

Jubilee of Prisoners

The Jubilee of Prisoners will be held on Sunday, December 14, 2025. "In every part of the world, believers, and their Pastors in particular, should be one in demanding dignified conditions for those in prison, respect for their human rights and above all the abolition of the death penalty, a provision at odds with Christian faith and one that eliminates all hope of forgiveness and rehabilitation. In order to offer prisoners a concrete sign of closeness, I would myself like to open a Holy Door in a prison, as a sign inviting prisoners to look to the future with hope and a renewed sense of confidence." (Pope Francis, "Hope Does Not Disappoint," Bull of Indiction of the Ordinary Jubilee of the Year 2025). For additional resources, please see: [Jubilee of Prisoners](#).

December 2025 Liturgical Calendar

December 3: Saint Francis Xavier, Priest - Memorial (white)

December 7: Second Sunday of Advent

- No Vigil Mass for the Immaculate Conception. All Masses of December 7 will be celebrated as the Second Sunday of Advent

December 8: The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Patronal Feast Day of the United States of America - Holy Day of Obligation

- No Vigil Mass for the Immaculate Conception; all Masses of December 7 will be celebrated as the Second Sunday of Advent
- Ritual Masses (i.e. Order of Matrimony, Funerals) are not permitted
- Gloria is sung or said
- Creed is said
- Mass proper is found in the Proper of Saints
- Solemn Blessing #1 or #15 may be used
- Today is a solemnity. Incorporating incense, festive music, and a more formal Gospel procession is appropriate

December 9: Saint Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin - optional memorial (white)

December 12: Our Lady of Guadalupe, Feast

Patroness of the Americas

- Gloria is sung or said
- Creed is omitted
- Add the needs of pregnant women for the Universal Prayer; for sample intercessions, see *Book of Blessings*, Chapter 1, section 8, "Order for the Blessing of a Mother"

December 13: Saint Lucy, Virgin and Martyr - Memorial (red)

December 14: Third Sunday of Advent (*Gaudete Sunday*)

- Liturgical Color: Rose or Violet
- The Gloria is not sung or said
- Creed is recited

December 17-24: Weekday Masses

- Second part of Advent begins
- The prayer texts and readings for Weekday Masses are taken from the specific calendar date
- *O Antiphons* begin
- Preface II of Advent may be used beginning December 15

December 22: Fourth Sunday of Advent

- The Gloria is not sung
- Creed is recited
- Preface II of Advent is used

December 2025 Liturgical Calendar, cont'd.

Christmas Masses

- Vestments: White/Gold
- The Gloria is sung or said
- The Creed is recited. *Remind the assembly that all kneel when the incarnation is mentioned*
- Solemn Blessing for the Nativity of the Lord (#2) may be used
- Blessing of the Nativity Scene can be found in Book of Blessing, Ch. 48
- Blessing of a Christmas Tree can be found in the Book of Blessing, Ch.49
- There are four Mass settings (proper antiphons, readings, and orations) for the Solemnity of the Nativity. The Roman Missal contains four Mass settings for the Nativity of Jesus:
 - ◊ at the Vigil Mass,
 - ◊ at the Mass during the Night,
 - ◊ at the Mass at Dawn, and
 - ◊ at the Mass during the Day
- The *Lectionary for Mass (LM)* likewise has four sets of readings. While Mass formularies ought to correspond to the actual time of day or night, there is greater flexibility for choosing the readings. The *LM* indicates that the first set of readings for Mass at the Vigil “may also be used for Masses on Christmas Day, with the option of choosing from one or other of the three sets of readings according to the pastoral needs of each congregation” (rubric from the *Lectionary for Mass*, 13).

December 24 and 25: Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord

Anticipated Masses for the Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord **start at 4 pm at the earliest.**

Midnight Mass

The Christmas Proclamation should be sung before the Mass during the Night begins; the text is found in Appendix I of the Missal. The Entrance Hymn immediately follows the chant.

December 26: Saint Stephen, the First Martyr, Feast

- Liturgical color: red
- Gloria is sung or said
- Solemn Blessing for the Nativity of the Lord may be used to unify the days of the octave

December 27: Saint John the Evangelist, Apostle and Evangelist, Feast

- Liturgical color: red
- Gloria is sung or said
- Solemn Blessing for the Nativity of the Lord may be used

December 28: Feast of the Holy Family, Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

- Liturgical color: white
- Gloria is sung or said
- Creed is recited
- Solemn Blessing #2, #3, or Prayer over the People #25 may be used
- Blessing of a Family (see *Book of Blessings*, Ch. 1)

Jubilee 2025 Information

Bishop Persico Issues Jubilee Indulgence Decree

The indulgence, a priceless gift of divine mercy, is one of the special *signs* of the Jubilee Year. On Wednesday, November 27, 2024, Bishop Persico issued a decree outlining the requirements for the reception of indulgences related to the Jubilee Year 2025 in the Diocese of Erie. All the *truly repentant* faithful, moved by a spirit of charity, who, purified through the sacrament of penance and refreshed by Holy Communion, will be able to obtain the indulgence by undertaking spiritual activities as outlined in the decree found at: [Diocese of Erie Indulgence Decree](#).

Places of Jubilee Pilgrimage in the Jubilee Year

Every Jubilee celebration has aspects of pilgrimage. The sites of pilgrimage are the holy doors of the four papal basilicas in Rome. In the dioceses of the world, the cathedral church is a place of pilgrimage. In the Diocese of Erie, Bishop Persico has designated Saint Leo Magnus Church in Ridgway as a secondary place of pilgrimage.

Mass “For the Holy Year”

The Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments confirmed three new Mass formularies, “For the Holy Year.” These Masses may be celebrated whenever special celebrations are held during the Jubilee, except on solemnities, Sundays and feasts, during Holy Week and the Easter Triduum, days within the Octaves of the Nativity and of Easter, Advent weekdays from December 17 to December 24 inclusive, the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls’ Day) and Ash Wednesday. The proper readings provided may only be used in Ordinary Time; during the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter, the usual daily readings are required. In addition to the Mass prayers and readings, the Dicastery also provides five samples for the Penitential Act, and four invitations, responses, and concluding orations for the Universal Prayer. These liturgical resources are available in the attachment to this newsletter and at: [USCCB Jubilee Year Votive Masses and Various Needs](#).

In light of the Jubilee’s theme, “Pilgrims of Hope,” the prayers naturally stress the themes of pilgrimage and hope. Incorporated into Christ, the faithful are a Body of believers, filled with hope. They look forward to the Lord’s coming in the present and at the end of the ages, an expectation which gives them an eternal vision and moves them to make pilgrimage to God and neighbor. The titles of the Prefaces underline the Christocentric meaning of the Jubilee Year: “Christ, our sole hope,” (Form A); “Christ, our true hope,” (Form B); and “Christ, God and man, the Savior of all” (Form C).

The readings provided for this Mass are nearly identical to those of the annual Chrism Mass (Lectionary for Mass, no. 260): Isaiah 61:1-3a, 6a, 8b-9; Psalm 89:21-22, 25 and 27; and Luke 4:16-21. In Isaiah, the prophet declares that he has been anointed by the Lord “to announce a year of favor,” and, in the Psalm, God speaks about his servant David: “with my holy oil [I have] anointed him.” These passages culminate in the Gospel passage from Luke, where Christ, at the beginning of his public ministry, reads the prophecy of Isaiah (61:1-2) and declares it fulfilled: “The Lord has sent me to announce a year of favor.” In addition to these selections, there is one additional option for the First Reading, Romans 5:5-11, whose verse 5 opens the Bull of Indiction: “Hope does not disappoint.”

Jubilee Logo

Individuals and organizations may download the Jubilee logo in high resolution and the main languages at: [Jubilee Logo](#). Since the logo is subject to copyright, its use is intended for pastoral and non-profit purposes only. Such use is to be linked to the following pastoral and ecclesial initiatives with no commercial purposes:

- Place the trademark on materials related to the Jubilee, such as: pamphlets, postcards, brochures, posters, outlines, banners, websites and other media;
- Place branding on pastoral materials to be used for spiritual preparation for the Jubilee;
- Place trademark on promotional materials related to the Jubilee, particularly on posters, banners, T-shirts, hats, mugs, and other materials and media; not for commercial use.

Jubilee Websites: Vatican: <https://www.iubilaeum2025.va/en.html>
Diocesan: <https://www.eriercd.org/holyyear2025.html>

Jubilee Hymn

“Pilgrims of Hope” is the Jubilee 2025 hymn. Prepared by Pierangelo Sequeri, set to music by Francesco Meneghello, the hymn intercepts the many themes of the Holy Year: creation, fraternity, God’s tenderness, and hope. The English translation, recording and music can be found at: [Jubilee Hymn](#).

Eucharistic Congress 2029

Courtesy of Catholic News Service:

The National Eucharistic Congress, Inc. is thrilled to share that initial steps preparing for the 11th National Eucharistic Congress in 2029 have begun. The location for the event has not been shared but organizers of the event will provide more details in the near future.

Recurring Information:

Colds and Flu

People feeling ill should avoid receiving Communion from the chalice. Priests are encouraged to use good pastoral common sense to calm the fears of the faithful during cold and flu season. An example of this might include reminding the faithful not to receive the Precious Blood, if they are ill.

Workshops for Liturgical Ministers

If any parish or institution would like a workshop for liturgical ministers, especially Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion or lectors, please contact the Office for Divine Worship. If a parish or institution conducts its own workshop for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, please remember to present candidates for this ministry to the Bishop when they are deemed prepared by the pastor or chaplain of said institution.

The following resource is available from the Liturgical Institute at Mundelein for the formation of parish liturgical ministers: Parish Liturgical Ministers.

Time for Vigil Masses and Anticipated Masses

The time for Vigil Masses and Anticipated Masses in the Diocese of Erie is no earlier than 4:00 PM. This applies to Holy Days of Obligation as well, including Christmas.

Time of the Easter Vigil 2026

The Easter Vigil is the first Mass of Easter Sunday and is not in any way to be considered an Anticipated Mass for Easter Sunday. This is why the discipline of the Church insists that it should not begin before nightfall in any circumstance. It may be helpful to know that sunset, according to a variety of models, occurs approximately at 7:24 PM on April 4, 2026. This information is provided at this time to assist with calendar planning for 2025/2026. In general, given the variable date for Easter, it seems best to schedule the Easter Vigil each year for 8:30 PM or later.

Copyrights

According to the United States Copyright Office, if you reproduce, distribute, publicly display, or derive a new piece from a copyrighted work without the permission of the copyright owner, you may have infringed on copyright. That could include putting a poem or song on your website, printing an essay or column in your bulletin, or even streaming a service on your website, Facebook or YouTube that includes the performance of hymns from a hymnal you have purchased. The safest thing a church can do is only to use copyrighted materials when you have the express written permission of the copyright owner. This is generally accomplished by purchasing the appropriate license. The majority of parishes use OneLicense.net.

In worship aids:

- To license the readings for a worship aid, parishes can contact: Mary Elizabeth Sperry at msperry@uscgb.org. If you need any other clarification, please call the Office for Divine Worship at 814-824-1271.
- For reprinting excerpts of the Roman Missal in a worship aid, credit is given to the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL).

On screens:

- The Committee on Divine Worship does not permit projecting readings and liturgical texts on screens during the liturgy. The bishops believe that since people spend much time on screens, the Sacred Liturgy should be a prayerful break from that. They also think screens distract from the liturgy itself.