



June 28, 2024

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

When we think of mission territory, we are likely to think of Africa or Asia, not of parts of our own country. Yet, there are many poor, sparsely populated dioceses in our country who need our help to minister to the People of God and to spread the Good News.

The **Collection for National Needs**, to be taken this year on **July 20 and 21**, gives each of us the opportunity to stand in solidarity with poorer dioceses in the United States. This collection is a combination of two other collections:

- **The Catholic Home Missions Appeal** impacts the lives of nearly 9 million Catholics. Through annual grants, the Catholic Home Missions Appeal funds catechesis for children and adults, seminarian education, lay ministry training, Hispanic ministry and other pastoral programs in needy dioceses. The dioceses funded by the appeal comprise nearly 45 percent of all US dioceses.
- **The Black and Indian Mission Collection** helps to evangelize and support our African American, Native American and Alaskan Native communities with mission schools, religious education programs, the purchase of catechetical materials and ministry training.

The struggle to receive basic pastoral care and catechesis is faced by thousands of faithful living in dioceses within our own country. I ask your generous response to the Collection for National Needs on July 20 and 21. Your support will truly make a difference in strengthening the Church at home. Be assured of my prayers for you and your families in these summer months.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

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