



Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana

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April 21, 2025

Statement by Bishop Timothy L. Doherty to the clergy, religious and laity of the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana

On hearing of the death of Pope Francis, I simply pray that Christ take our brother bishop and present him to God the Most High. Eternal peace grant unto our Holy Father!

Let's not be too quick to turn the page if we have not read the page, the man, as we had him. This is not how we grieve or mourn someone whom the Holy Spirit anointed.

In the days ahead we remember our Easter profession of faith. All of it. And particularly that we pledge belief in the catholic (small "c") church-- one, holy, and apostolic. This is different than saying we adhere to specific doctrines or disciplines that have grown out of this foundational belief based in Scripture and Tradition.

I am sure that there will be much commentary about Francis's influence on Church life. As with former popes, it may take decades for his legacy to come into focus. But, in these days, I prefer to think of how he proclaimed an Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, 2015-2016. God's mercy is much more than forgiveness. This mercy is also described as loving kindness, a phrase that we hear often at Mass and in the Hebrew Scriptures. It is as real and present as the air around us. His hope was that we would breathe this air, this grace, and deepen our relationship with God and each other.

So, brothers and sisters of our diocese, and all people of good will, let us pray with and for each other as we commend Pope Francis to God's unfathomable mercy, and for the conclave as his successor is discerned.

END