

Francis, a bishop, a servant of the servants of God –

I send health and blessings to my beloved son, **Robert Mark Pipta**, who was selected from the Eparchy under the Protection of Holy Mary in the city of Phoenix and, until recently, rector of the Seminary of Saints Cyril and Methodius in the City of Pittsburgh, since you have been chosen bishop of the Eparchy of Parma of the Ruthenians. The Mother of Jesus illumines before her pilgrim people a visible sign of our certain hope and consolation (see *Lumen Gentium*, no. 68). She continued to stand by the cross while her Son hung thereupon, thus teaching the faithful to stand in hope in circumstances beyond all hope. Now we have been taught by the amazing example of the Blessed Virgin Mary, as we ourselves proclaim without ceasing our Joy of the Gospel, since we have the charge of pasturing the flock of our Lord. As such, it falls to the overseership of the Roman Pontiff to select qualified guides who serve the common unity of all who have been left orphaned of a bishop. Since, then, the Eparchy of Parma belonging to the Ruthenians is bereft of a pastor, we have turned our mind to you, my beloved son, who being already possessed of a proven and secure solicitude for pastoral ministry have been reviewed as proven in your ability for the aforementioned community that is in need of being governed. For this reason, after I heard the recommendation of the prefect of the Dicastery for Eastern Churches, we have established you by our apostolic jurisdiction as the eparchial bishop in **Parma of the Ruthenians**, along with all the rights and obligations added thereto pertaining to the very same office according to the Code of Canon Law. You are able to receive your episcopal ordination wheresoever you wish from a Catholic bishop of your own choosing, provided that the liturgical norms are preserved. Nonetheless, prior to this, as the ecclesiastical law has established, it is necessary for you to duly make your profession of faith and promise of obedience towards us and our successors presiding in this See according to the norms of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches. You should teach of course both the clergy and Christian faithful entrusted to you for your pastoral manner of care about this decree. We exhort all such persons, during your leadership, that they should take care to observe the divine precepts even in a greater manner of fervor in their daily lives, that they may show publicly the living presence of Christ in the world. Whence, we exhort you, most beloved son, that having put your trust openly in God with the intercession of the most sweet Theotokos and Saints Cyril and Methodius, you might guide the minds of all the faithful along the way of salvation and peace. Given at the Lateran Basilica in Rome on the 31st day of the month of August in the year of our Lord 2023.