



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP
DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

May 6, 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ and All People of Good Will:

Tomorrow morning, Wednesday, May 7, the Conclave that has been called for the sacred duty of choosing the next Successor of Saint Peter, will be preceded by the offering of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass by all of those in attendance. They will offer to God the Father His Only-Begotten Son crucified, died, buried and risen from the dead for the salvation of the human race. In this act of profound gratitude and humility, an immeasurable sacrifice is offered with the heart-wrenching prayer that the Holy Spirit will drive out any and all unworthy thoughts and desires, and in place of such distraction, open their hearts to the Divine Will of God for a Pontiff who will truly be God's own choice to lead all people back to God Himself.

For such an enormous responsibility as this, any kind of speculation, posturing, or inappropriate speech is out of order. Therefore, I call on all of us to engage in the practice that is found in Sacred Scripture: to fast and to pray as a community as was done both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. Fasting keeps us vigilant against being drawn into a very secular approach to a most sacred and consequential experience. Prayer that sincerely asks, as Jesus taught us: "Thy Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven" restores right reason and focus on the eternal and universal as opposed to the self-interest that leads more to a hellish existence on earth and even a bitterness toward the unselfish happiness of Heaven.

For these reasons, I call upon all to join with me in a period of fasting and prayer beginning this evening, Tuesday, May 6, and lasting until the successor of Pope Francis is announced. Our fasts may be a repeat of our own Lenten fasts. Our acts of charity for the poor may be offered as a fast.

In a truly serious call to prayer, I ask everyone to pray the Rosary, asking at each Our Father that God's Will be done. I ask that at each Hail Mary we ask the intercession of Our Lady to "pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death." I ask that at each Glory be we give glory to God for every blessing, especially the blessing and gift of His Son in the Holy Eucharist. Thus, having already recited the Apostles' Creed to begin the Rosary, we will have reinforced our belief in the truths we had already recounted.

May God look upon His children and bless us and our Church and our world now and forever.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Peter A. Libasci, D.D.
Bishop of Manchester