



Dilexi Te



# Pope Leo XIV



## Dilexi Te

Apostolic Exhortation  
on Love for the Poor

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**APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION**  
***DILEXI TE***  
**OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV**  
**TO ALL CHRISTIANS**  
**ON LOVE FOR THE POOR**

1. “I HAVE LOVED YOU” (*Rev* 3:9). The Lord speaks these words to a Christian community that, unlike some others, had no influence or resources, and was treated instead with violence and contempt: “You have but little power... I will make them come and bow down before your feet” (*Rev* 3:8-9). This text reminds us of the words of the canticle of Mary: “He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty” (*Lk* 1:52-53).

2. This declaration of love, taken from the Book of Revelation, reflects the inexhaustible mystery that Pope Francis reflected upon in the Encyclical *Dilexit Nos* on the human and divine love of the heart of Jesus Christ. There we saw how Jesus identified himself “with the lowest ranks of society” and how, with his love poured out to the end, he confirms the dignity of every human being, especially when “they are weak, scorned,

or suffering.”<sup>1</sup> As we contemplate Christ’s love, “we too are inspired to be more attentive to the sufferings and needs of others, and confirmed in our efforts to share in his work of liberation as instruments for the spread of his love.”<sup>2</sup>

3. For this reason, in continuity with the Encyclical *Dilexit Nos*, Pope Francis was preparing in the last months of his life an Apostolic Exhortation on the Church’s care for the poor, to which he gave the title *Dilexi Te*, as if Christ speaks those words to each of them, saying: “You have but little power,” yet “I have loved you” (*Rev* 3:9). I am happy to make this document my own — adding some reflections — and to issue it at the beginning of my own pontificate, since I share the desire of my beloved predecessor that all Christians come to appreciate the close connection between Christ’s love and his summons to care for the poor. I too consider it essential to insist on this path to holiness, for “in this call to recognize him in the poor and the suffering, we see revealed the very heart of Christ, his deepest feelings and choices, which every saint seeks to imitate.”<sup>3</sup>

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1. FRANCIS, Encyclical Letter *Dilexit Nos* (24 October 2024), 170: AAS 116 (2024), 1422.
  2. Ibid., 171: AAS 116 (2024), 1422-1423.
  3. FRANCIS, Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate* (19 March 2018), 96: AAS 110 (2018), 1137.



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