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# **“Dilexi te,” Pope Leo XIV’s First Apostolic Exhortation**

This letter to all Christians is the continuation of a project begun by Pope Leo’s predecessor, Pope Francis, on the theme of service to the poor, in whose faces we see “the suffering of the innocent, and therefore the suffering of Christ himself.”

10/09/2025

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“Dilexi te” (*I have loved you*) is Pope Leo XIV’s first apostolic exhortation, promulgated on 9 October 2025. Centered on Christ’s special love for the poor and the call for the Church to renew its solidarity with the marginalized, the letter invites all Christians to live a faith that is both compassionate and transformative.

The **first chapter** reflects on the Christian meaning of caring for the poor, reminding us that it is not a mere act of philanthropy but an essential expression of faith. It calls us to listen to “the cry of the poor” and to recognize the many forms of poverty (material, moral, and spiritual) that challenge the Christian conscience.

The **second chapter** explains God's special love for the poor as an expression of his mercy. It presents Christ as a model of closeness and service and reminds us that love of neighbor cannot be separated from love of God: the works of mercy are the standard of the final judgment.

The **third chapter** reviews the Church's history of service to those in need, showing a continuous thread of charity and dedication that has sustained Christian life through the centuries.

The **fourth chapter** explores the social dimension of this commitment, highlighting the Church's Social Teaching and the impulse of the Second Vatican Council. It denounces the structures that generate inequality and calls for valuing the experience and wisdom of the poor as a gift to the whole ecclesial community.

## The **fifth and final chapter**

concludes with a call to personal and communal conversion. It recalls that care for the poor is a constant, daily task and that every concrete gesture of help and closeness, however small, is a living expression of the Gospel in today's world.

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