



Moderator of the Curia

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington

Dear Brother Priests,

On this, my first Thanksgiving as a bishop and as Moderator of the Curia, I write first to join with each of you in giving thanks to the Lord for the gifts of faith and of our vocation that He has bestowed on us in His goodness. At my ordination to the episcopate earlier this year, I was humbled again by how privileged we are to serve the Lord and His people as priests. And since then, in this learning period, I have been so grateful to Him for the daily graces He gives us. “Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.” Amen.

This year, we had occasion to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Cardinal Gregory’s ordination to the priesthood, and we give thanks to God for his vocation and for sending us such a good and humble shepherd. Amidst this joyous time, on the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, our joy was increased with the ordination of six new priests for the Archdiocese and, God willing, our fraternity will grow even more next year with the priestly ordination of an astounding 16 transitional deacons, to go with the 12 new permanent deacons who were also ordained this year. This is a bountiful harvest indeed, but let us continue to pray that the Lord send us even more workers into the field.

I also want to express to you, my brother priests, my appreciation and gratitude for all that *you* do as servants in the vineyard of the Lord. The Year 2023 had its share of challenges – and of bright spots too as reflected above – and 2024 will have both as well. Yet, your priestly ministry day in and day out brings into this world the presence of our Savior Jesus Christ in people’s lives. You are the living face of God’s love, mercy and truth in a world in need of more light and hope. Not only are you a blessing to the flock entrusted to us, I am personally grateful for your prayers for me, and your friendship, in my new episcopal ministry.

You do so much good in sharing the Gospel, as well as in the less exciting administrative functions of leadership. We depend upon you all, and I cannot thank you enough. In the spirit of the Universal Church’s synodal discernment, I would also suggest as good and faithful stewards that the upcoming ending of the Church’s liturgical year, as well as the secular calendar, is a prime opportunity to engage in some self-assessment of our own, personal and institutional, to determine what we each are doing well and how we might better meet the needs and challenges of today and tomorrow. Through it all, please know that you have the support of Cardinal Gregory, my brother bishops, and myself.

May this Thanksgiving Day be for you a time of joy and appreciation. As we next enter into that wonderful time of the year from Advent to Christmas and then to 2024, through the intercession

of St. Joseph, Patron of the Church, and the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, I pray that the Lord send His goodness and light down upon you and all those you touch. As always, should you have questions or need assistance from my office and the Pastoral Center, please let us know.

With gratitude for your priestly ministry, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Juan Esposito

Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia



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