



**April 21, 2025**

**My Dear Friends,**

With hearts full of sorrow and at the same time with gratitude and hope, we join the Church and many others around the world in mourning the passing of our Holy Father, Pope Francis.

His life was a luminous witness to the Gospel—a shepherd who led with tenderness, a prophet who called us to conversion, and a father who embraced the poor, the forgotten, the marginalized and the wounded with the love of Christ.

From the moment he stepped onto the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica in 2013 and humbly asked for our prayers, Pope Francis invited us to a renewed encounter with Jesus. He reminded us that the heart of our faith is mercy, that the Church is a "field hospital" for sinners, and that no one is beyond the reach of God's love. His tireless advocacy for the marginalized, his insistence on the joy of the Gospel, and his call to care for our common home challenged and inspired us all.

Pope Francis prayed and called for a world where we recognize our shared humanity and work together for justice, peace, and solidarity. He frequently spoke about overcoming divisions, welcoming migrants, and fostering a culture of encounter, all of which contribute to making the world a true home for all.

Even in this time of sorrow, we take comfort in the hope of the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Pope Francis lived for Christ and labored tirelessly as his vicar on earth for over 12 years. He now goes to meet Him, the Lord he served so faithfully. Let us pray for his soul, entrusting him to the loving embrace of God the Father, and let us honor his legacy by striving to live as missionary disciples—bringing the light of Christ to a world so in need of it.

May our Blessed Mother, whom Pope Francis so deeply loved, intercede for him and for the Church he led with wisdom and courage. And may we remain steadfast in our faith, knowing that Christ is always with His Church, guiding us forward in love.

With every blessing,

Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano  
Bishop of Bridgeport