



Diocese of Worcester
Office of the Bishop
49 Elm Street
Worcester, Massachusetts 01609

March 30, 2023

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Participating in the Way of the Cross is such a powerful way for Christians to recall the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ during Lent. Christians in the Holy Land are faced with the particular challenge of bringing their own suffering to the cross as they witness to the faith. The Latin Patriarch of the Holy Land has been a voice for Christians living not just in Jerusalem, but also in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon.

Christians living in the Holy Land not only struggle to live their faith and worship in their parishes – they are also the stewards of the sacred places as Christians arrive in pilgrimage day after day. Each year, the Holy Father asks Catholic parishes around the world to take up a **Good Friday Collection** to support Christians in the Holy Land. In particular, the collection supports the work of the Franciscans in the sacred shrines and allows them to receive pilgrims, minister to the parishes, provide formation and education in the communities and schools, and care for the basic needs of the people in the Holy Land. Your support is essential to their ministry.

Pilgrims are finally, slowly returning to the Holy Places after two very difficult years that really put to the test the small and fragile Christian presence in the Holy Land. But challenges are not over yet. Pilgrimages are still far from pre-pandemic numbers and the actual political situation, bringing new threats to the Christian community, makes your support more needed than ever.

Please be generous in this year's Good Friday collection in your parish. I invite you to visit www.myfranciscan.org to learn more about the good work made possible thanks to your response to this pontifical collection. With your help, the Franciscans can continue to be a light of hope to Christians who continue to struggle in the Holy Land.

With every prayerful best wish, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Robert J. McManus
Bishop of Worcester

Please share with your bulletin on Palm Sunday and take up the collection on Good Friday.