



DIOCESE OF VENICE IN FLORIDA
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

April 21, 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The Catholic Church and, indeed, the whole world mourns the death of Pope Francis, who died today, April 21, 2025, at 7:35 am Rome time. The loss of this dedicated and caring Shepherd is keenly felt, and there is profound sadness at his passing.

All Catholics in the Diocese of Venice are asked to offer prayers for the repose of the soul of Pope Francis, including the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be; recitation of the Rosary for the intention of the soul of Pope Francis is also recommended. On Thursday, April 24, 2025 at 1 pm, I will celebrate a Mass for Pope Francis at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Venice, and all are welcome to attend. Further, Parishes throughout the Diocese will be offering Masses and prayers for the repose of the soul of Pope Francis.

Pope Francis served as Bishop of Rome from March 13, 2013, until his death. In possession of a true pastor's heart, his concern for the poor and those on the peripheries, as well as his devotion to the Blessed Mother, were among the hallmarks of his Papacy.

Having been blessed to meet with Pope Francis and speak with him on a number of occasions, I was particularly touched by his humility, sense of humor, and profound concern for "the other." Truly, Pope Francis was always so warm and encouraging to all.

In his final address on Easter Sunday, Pope Francis reminded us, "The resurrection of Jesus is indeed the basis of our hope. For in the light of this event, hope is no longer an illusion. Thanks to Christ – crucified and risen from the dead – hope does not disappoint!" As we continue to mourn the death of our great pastor and with hope in the resurrection, kindly join me in prayer for Pope Francis: "Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace."

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Frank J. Dewane
Bishop of the Diocese of
Venice in Florida