

A Glimpse of Heaven on Earth

by Julia Occhiogrosso

In our last newsletter I wrote about our guest Andres†, who had severe cataracts leaving him legally blind. We are happy to report that Andres has had surgery in both eyes and has recovered his sight! This was made possible by the generosity of many.

Since Andres came to live with us, numerous volunteers have stepped up to assist with his ongoing care, providing transportation to dialysis sessions and medical appointments, picking up prescriptions, and helping with other needs as they arise. When Gary and I are out of town, they have taken shifts to be present with him at the house.

We are grateful for the support and realize that all we do at the Catholic Worker is contingent upon the power of community – a people embracing a common vision and partaking in a common work. Our common work expresses itself in enactments of the Corporal Works of Mercy: feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, distributing clothing, sheltering the homeless, and caring for the sick. Participating in this common work brings us closer to realizing our common vision – a vision with the audacity to imagine a world where divine love is the defining principle of all human interactions – gracing us with a glimpse of heaven on earth.

Thank you for all you do to sustain a commitment to this vision.

† name changed



Andres watching the rain out our front door

PHOTO BY JULIA OCCHIOGROSSO

Dilexi te: Commitment to poor is prerequisite of faith, not a consequence

by Joseph Tulloch

Pope Leo XIV has published his first Apostolic Exhortation, *Dilexi te* ('I have loved you'), on love for the poor.

The text, begun by Pope Francis and now completed by Pope Leo, was presented on Thursday [October 9, 2025] at a conference in the Holy See Press Office.

Among the presenters was the Franciscan Fr. Frédéric-Marie le Méhauté, a professor of theology in Paris, and Provincial Vicar of the Province of France and Belgium for the Order of Friars Minor. He spoke to Vatican News about the apostolic exhortation.

Q: Could you tell us a little bit about this new encyclical? What are some of its main themes?

A: The main theme is, as the subtitle explains, love for the poor. But not only loving them – how we love them, how we work with them. How do we read the Gospel with them? How do we build society not only for them, but with them? How do we make it clear that poor people are central to the Church?

Q: These are topics which were very dear to the late Pope Francis, and as we know, the new exhortation was a collaboration
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rative effort, written by both him and Pope Leo. What in this document continues the magisterium of Pope Francis, and what's new?

A: I would say it's very difficult, almost impossible, to say whether a sentence in the Exhortation is from Pope Francis or from Pope Leo. One of the great things about this text is that it's very consistent — there's a great continuity between the two.

We cannot say that this is the final text of Francis' pontificate. It's a joint text, and in my opinion, it's also a kind of programme for Leo's pontificate.

Q: What are some of the highlights of the document?

A: I think the theological analysis of our commitment to the poor is very important. We sometimes think: OK, I go to church, I like Jesus, I go to Mass, and, in order to be a good person, I need to help the poor. In other words, we see the commitment to the poor as a consequence of our faith.

Pope Leo teaches us here that our commitment to the poor, living with the poor, living like the poor, is the place where we receive Revelation, where we receive the Gospel.

There's no other place to do that, other than through our encounter with the poor.

For me, this is very, very important. I do not care for the poor because I'm Christian. Firstly, I care for the poor, and then I receive Revelation. Only then do I come to know who the true God is.

Q: You yourself, as a Franciscan, have taken a vow of poverty. How does that vowed, or chosen, poverty differ from the poverty that many people suffer against their will every day?

A: I had a very important experience when I was a young friar. I went to work with a group of homeless people, and I introduced myself as a religious. Afterwards, a man came up and asked me what that meant. I explained that it's someone who has taken vows of chastity, obedience, and poverty. He grabbed the back of my neck and said: "Don't tell me about poverty; you know nothing about it."

For me, that was a very powerful experience, which is still very present in my life and in my theological work. I work with poor people, but I do not know what their life is like. I do not know the reality of sleeping under a bridge or having an empty stomach. I really don't. So I need to listen to them, so they can explain their life to me, how they read the Gospel.

For me, 'chosen' poverty is something different. It's a way to approach people without power, with empty hands.

Q: You mentioned earlier that there's a



Our Wednesday morning prep crew volunteers finish a bean side dish.
From left: Mary Louise, Sue, Ev, Nori, Dorothy, Bev, Larry and Joy

sense in which Christians are called to live like the poor. What does that mean, and how do we do it?

A: Well, to be honest, I don't know what that means. For me, it's a kind of direction, a kind of unrest in your life. It means not closing yourself off to focus on your own relationships, your own money, and so on.

Someone recommended always keeping a broken glass in your home, just to remind you that there is somebody sleeping and living outside. If we live with this lack of tranquility, we will be able to take advantage of occasions to meet people, walk with them, and be led by them.

We could go to the poor to teach them something. And perhaps we can teach them something — help them understand the Gospel, and so on. But we also need to go to them with the realization that we don't know everything.

We need to ask them what they know that we don't. To ask them to explain how they see life, how they see the Gospel.

Q: Final question: what is the one thing you would like people to take away from the Exhortation?

A: Do not be afraid of the poor. They can give you the true Gospel.

(edited from *VaticanNews.VA*)

We will be Closed Dec. 26 - Jan. 3

Gift Suggestions

Catholic Worker Artwork by Sarah Fuller for sale on T-Shirts, stickers, posters, cards and more: redbubble.com/people/sarahfullerart/shop

Homeboy Industries, founded by Fr. Greg Boyle, SJ. Support the largest gang intervention program in the world: "Jobs not Jails." Baked goods and merchandise: ShopHomeBoy.com

Book Recommendations:

Luke's Jesus and Sabbath Economics: Healing Affluenza and Resisting Plutocracy by Ched Myers: bookshop.org/shop/chedmyers

Broken and Shared by Jeff Dietrich of the Los Angeles Catholic Worker: lacatholicworker.org/la-times-article/

PLEASE JOIN US

Volunteer Scheduling:
(702) 647-0728

or mail@lvcw.org

Thurs.-Sat., 6:00 a.m.

Morning prayer at the Catholic Worker

Thurs.-Sat., 6:15 a.m. Over 300 "To-go" hot meals served to the poor and homeless (6:15 a.m.: meal assembly, 7:00 - 7:30 a.m.: meal distribution)

Wed.-Fri., 8-10 a.m. Kitchen crew prepares for the next morning's meal
Thursday, 11:30 a.m.

50 lunches taken to the homeless

prepared by Our Lady of Wisdom Italo-Greek Byzantine Catholic Church

Friday, 8-10 a.m. Clean the World Foundation shower trailer in our empty lot, up to 40 showers given. We provide clean clothing and hygiene supplies, Touro University students offer a monthly medical clinic.

Second Sat. of the month

Knights of Columbus Pancake Breakfast for the homeless (Christmas Day in Dec., not held in January 2026)

We are a Participating Member of Nevadans for the Common Good
(for info, contact Julia@lvcw.org)

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