



Parish of the Nativity of the Lord

Book+Circle – March 2026

Pope Leo's first Apostolic Exhortation – Dilexi te (I have loved you)

About this document

Released on October 4, 2025, Dilexi Te ("I Have Loved You") is Pope Leo XIV's inaugural Apostolic Exhortation, drafted in continuity with Pope Francis's final works. It serves as an urgent call for the Church to abandon indifference and embrace a "poor Church for the poor," focusing on caring for the marginalized and recognizing Christ in their suffering

How did this document make us feel?

- This document needed time to digest each section, some of us found it quite 'hard going'
- As we read through the content we could 'feel' that Pope Francis was behind the content, and we appreciated that Pope Leo had taken on the challenge of completing the document
- We felt it was a 'ponderous' reflection on the importance for Christians to have 'love for the poor'

What did we think were the main strengths?

- This is a very important topic it will not go away, Jesus talked about caring for the poor 2000 years ago and not much has changed. The document reminded us all how unbalanced wealth is across the World and that there is such a high proportion of people living on very low incomes or none at all
- The document highlights that the poor show us all the face of Jesus and should not be ignored
- The importance of the Saints over the centuries in providing for 'the poor' whether through education, health, finances etc was very powerful to read about and to an extent inspirational

What did we think were the main weaknesses?

- We found the document hardwork, it was quite dry to read and therefore on reflection difficult to recall some of the key points being made
- Whilst Pope Leo does a good job at reinforcing the importance for all of us to 'care for the Poor' there was little in the way of guidance on how the Church/Christians can influence change today
 - We discussed the fact that the State in many developed countries takes on some responsibility for the Poor – whether through education, healthcare, financial benefits - what is missing is the spiritual side of caring for the Poor – that had been at the core for the Saints who helped. And in under-developed countries corruption is rife and the Poor are not looked after.

Would we recommend that this book is read by others?

- Yes, although not an easy read it helps give all Catholics an insight into what Pope Francis and Pope Leo are concerned about. And we would read any future Apostolic Exhortations.

Next Book+Circle – Small Meeting Room at St Joseph's

Friday 15 May 10.30 am: This is my body – By Bishop Robert Barron

Thursday 9 July @ 8.00pm – Into the Silent Land: the practice of contemplation by Martin Laird