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Pastoral Letter on the Sunday Obligation

(To be read as the homily the weekend of May 15 & 16)

“Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has everlasting life and I will raise him up on the Last Day”

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Diocese of Lafayette,

The third commandment of God, obliges us to keep holy the Lord’s Day. This commandment is fulfilled when we give God the most perfect worship possible, the worship of Jesus Christ himself in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. We also observe it by works of charity, spiritual reading, and refraining from unnecessary servile labor to spend time with family and loved ones. In this way we give God the adoration that is His due, nourish our souls with the Body and Blood of Christ and direct our lives to our eternal goal – life with God. This understanding is what we know as the “obligation for Catholics to participate in Mass every Sunday”.

Because of seriousness of the pandemic, the Sunday obligation was dispensed by me to comply with safety directives recommended by health authorities. Now that conditions have improved, people more frequently shop, socialize, go to gyms and participate in other activities outside their homes, the time has come to also observe the Lord’s Day by assisting at Mass on Sundays. I am therefore lifting the dispensation from Sunday Obligation in the Diocese of Lafayette beginning on June 6, 2021, the Feast of Corpus Christi. All Catholics will be seriously obligated to assist at Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. Those who are sick, in nursing homes, immune-compromised, of advanced age or caring for a sick person at home are, as before, exempt from the obligation.

I am humbled by so many who have already returned to Mass each Sunday. It is a testament to your faith and desire for the Eucharist. I thank God for that. I also wish to thank our many good priests who looked for ways to creatively continue to minister to us in a safe way during the pandemic. After consulting with experts who have confirmed that with proper precautions we can gather together for mass, I think that this is the proper time for us to come together to worship God.

I know that for many, the pandemic has been a time of spiritual renewal, a deeper appreciation for the Mass and a desire to receive the Eucharist. I ask you to join with me on June 6, the Feast of Corpus Christi, to worship God at Mass, hear His word in the Scriptures and be nourished with the Bread of Life, the Body and Blood of the Lord.

Wishing all of you God’s blessings, I am,

Most Reverend J. Douglas Deshotel
Bishop of Lafayette

SUPPORT THE CHURCH IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

RESTORE THE CHURCH BUILD THE FUTURE

Many countries transitioning from the former communist regimes in Eastern Europe continue to be stricken by poverty. In Albania, a country that experienced a particularly harsh form of communism, many young women facing extreme poverty succumb to misleading promises of marriage or work opportunities, drop out of school, and travel abroad. Separated from their families, they often find themselves in the difficult circumstances of domestic violence or even forced prostitution. The Catholic Church of Albania, which is being restored after the fall of communism, is at the forefront of helping young women overcome these risks through tuition support, the arts, faith activities, and culinary workshops that prepare them for work that allows them to support themselves and to contribute to their family budgets.

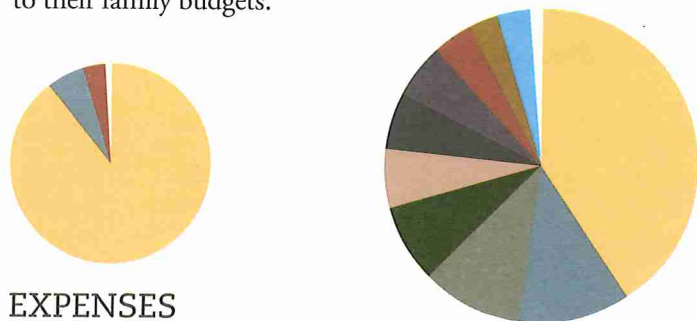
With support from the Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe, the Laura Vicuña Center and the Rogationist Fathers' high school has provided education, skills training, and brighter futures to 13 young women from the town of Tale. When you participate in the collection, you help to make education and life opportunities a reality for at-risk youth, such as the young women in Tale, and you provide a witness of the faith to a recovering region.

More information about the collection and the projects it supports can be found at www.usccb.org/ccee.

2019 DISTRIBUTION OF GRANTS

Total Number of Grants Approved: 339

Total Amount Approved: \$6,842,287



EXPENSES

■ Grants and Donations	89.2%
■ Program Costs	6.1%
■ Promotions and Fundraising Expenses	3.6%
□ Administrative Expenses	1.1%
Total Expenses	\$7,609,151

PROGRAM AREA	GRANTS	AMOUNT	PERCENT
■ Construction	96	\$2,787,059	40.73%
■ Social Aid	49	\$775,722	11.33%
■ Operational Support	39	\$728,697	10.65%
■ Scholarships	60	\$545,585	7.97%
■ Evangelization	31	\$416,358	6.09%
■ Education	11	\$394,760	5.77%
■ Seminary Support	18	\$378,605	5.53%
■ Equipment/ Accommodation Purchase	11	\$294,760	4.31%
■ Other	5	\$215,208	3.15%
■ Vehicle Purchase	13	\$211,743	3.09%
□ Multimedia	6	\$93,790	1.37%



Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe

OFFICE OF NATIONAL COLLECTIONS

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