

THE DIOCESE OF BELLEVILLE

March 11, 2024

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

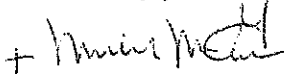
I write to you asking your support for this year's Pontifical Good Friday collection. Traditionally, your generosity helps the Franciscan Friars in the Holy Land to continue their work of providing hope to Christians and maintaining the sacred shrines in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and throughout the region.

Today, much hope is needed for Christians of the Holy Land. The tragic events that started on October 7, 2023, have brought many disastrous consequences. The Christian minority needs support for everything, including medicine and health care, food and school tuition. Despair is very strong, to the point that many Christians are thinking of leaving the country. Christians now represent less than 2% of the population, down from 23% a century ago.

Each year the Holy Father asks every Catholic parish around the world to take up a collection on Good Friday to support a Christian presence in the Holy Land. Your donation will go to supporting the work of the Franciscans in providing formation and education in communities and schools and caring for the basic needs of people while maintaining the sacred shrines and parishes. During such a difficult time, your gift to this collection is essential to the Franciscan ministry which is a light of hope to those living in the Holy Land.

Please join me in making a generous gift to assist our brothers and sisters as we walk together in Jesus's footsteps through the Cross to the Resurrection.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ 

Most Reverend Michael McGovern
Bishop of Belleville

Office of the Bishop
222 South Third - Belleville, Illinois 62220 - 1985
Phone: (618) 277-8181 Ext. 1081 - Fax: (618) 277-0387
E-mail: bmcgovern@diobelle.org