

OUR FAMILY NEWS

DECEMBER 29 | 2025



THE GOAL

To renew our parishes so they become places where individuals and families encounter Jesus and grow as missionary disciples

THE PLAN

To respond in faith to the challenges we face and to take the necessary steps to better equip our parish communities for mission.

OUR RESOLVE

To advance with unshakable conviction of the truth of the Gospel and a love that compels us to share the good news with those around us

Curia must reflect 'new humanity,' founded on love, solidarity, pope says

Carol Glatz • December 22, 2025

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The cardinals, bishops, priests, religious and laypeople who work in the Roman Curia are called to be a "sign of a new humanity," founded on mutual love and solidarity, not selfishness and individualism, Pope Leo XIV said.

"We are not mere gardeners tending our own plot, but disciples and witnesses of the Kingdom of God, called in Christ to be leaven of universal fraternity among different peoples, religions and cultures," he told cardinals and top Curia officials Dec. 22 during a traditional pre-Christmas meeting with them.

"This happens if we ourselves live as brothers and sisters and allow the light of communion to shine in the world," the pope said. "Let us remember this also in our curial service: the work of each is important for the whole, and the witness of a Christian life, expressed in communion, is the first and greatest service we can offer."

The traditional Christmas greeting took place in the Vatican's Hall of Blessing, which was decorated with red poinsettias and Christmas trees adorned with sparkling lights and silver and gold ornaments.

While previous popes used the pre-Christmas meeting to review the past year, Pope Leo continued Pope Francis' practice of using it as an opportunity to reflect on what can help or hinder the Curia's mission of sharing the Gospel. Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, dean of the College of Cardinals, offered a brief summary of the past eight months of Pope Leo's ministry in his opening remarks.

Continued on Page 20

MEET OUR FAMILY OF PARISHES ALL ARE WELCOME

Holy Family
24505 Meadowbrook Rd.
Novi, MI 48375
(248) 349-8847
www.holyfamilynovi.org

St. Joseph
830 S Lafayette St.
South Lyon, MI 48178
(248) 446-8700
www.stjcc.org

St. James
46325 Ten Mile Rd.
Novi, MI 48374
(248) 347-7778
www.stjamesnovi.org

St. William
531 Common St.
Walled Lake, MI 48390
(248) 624-1421
www.stwilliam.com



WHAT IS A FAMILY OF PARISHES?

A Family of Parishes is a group of three or more parishes that collaborate in deeper and more intentional ways than parishes have ever done before. Each parish in a Family will retain its own unique identity, similar to how each sibling has his or her own unique roll in the family.

**If you have an Catholic event
that you would to submit for publication,
send it to Ron Hartmus (St. James Church - Novi)**
bulletin@stjamesnovi.org

Curia must reflect 'new humanity,' founded on love, solidarity, pope says



Pope Leo XIV speaks to Vatican employees and their families during his annual pre-Christmas meeting with them in the Paul VI Audience Hall at the Vatican Dec. 22, 2025. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

OUR FAMILY OF PARISHES DAILY MASS SCHEDULE

Holy Family
24505 Meadowbrook Rd.
Novi, MI 48375
(248) 349-8847
www.holyfamilynovi.org

Monday	12:00 pm
Tuesday	9:00 am
Wednesday	12:00 pm
Thursday	9:00 am
Friday	9:00 am

St. James
46325 Ten Mile Rd.
Novi, MI 48374
248-347-7778
www.stjamesnovi.org

Monday	9:00 am
Tuesday	9:00 am
Wednesday	7:00 pm
Thursday	None
Friday	None

St. Joseph
830 S Lafayette St.
South Lyon, MI 48178
(248) 446-8700
www.stjcc.org

Monday	None
Tuesday	7:00 pm
Wednesday	9:00 am
Thursday	None
Friday	9:00 am

St. William
531 Common St.
Walled Lake, MI 48390
(248) 624-1421
www.stwilliam.com

Monday	None
Tuesday	8:00 am
Wednesday	8:00 am
Thursday	8:00 am
Friday	None

OUR FAMILY OF PARISHES RECONCILIATION SCHEDULE

Saturday 9:00 am
or by appointment

Wednesday 6:00 pm
Saturday 2:30 pm

Tuesday 6:00 pm
*First Tuesday
of the Month Only*
Saturday 3:30 pm

Announced Weekly



Holy Family
 24505 Meadowbrook
 Novi, MI 48375
 (248) 349-8847
www.holyfamilynovi.org
December 29, 2025

Fr. Bob LaCroix



Weekend Mass Times

Saturdays
4:30 pm
6:30 pm **Spanish**

Sundays
8:30 am
10:30 am
12:30 pm

Fr. Bob LaCroix
frbob@hfnovi.com

Janet Díaz
 Pastoral Formation Dir.
jdiaz@hfnovi.com

Gabriela Vázquez
 Hispanic Ministry Dir.
gvazquez@hfnovi.com

Katie Luther
 Evangelization Coord.
kluther@hfnovi.com

Dan Czarniecki
 Faith Formation Dir.
dczarniecki@hfnovi.com



TUESDAYS, BEGINNING ON JANUARY 6, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Losing a loved one is one of life's most challenging experiences. If you're struggling to cope with the weight of grief, know that you're not alone. Join at any time.

For more information contact:
 Don Foust, dmf6547@gmail.com
 Lynda Rothley, rothley6@yahoo.com



WEEKEND, FRIDAY & SATURDAY, JANUARY 9 & 10
 Join Our Soup Troop! 🍲

Whether you enjoy cooking, serving, or simply spreading kindness, there's a place for you in the Soup Troop.

Meal Prep Friday, January 9 @ 6:00 pm - Holy Family
 Saturday, January 10 @ 8:45 am - CASS

Interested? Let us know—we'd be thrilled to have you!
 For more information contact Roxanne at roxanne@hfnovi.com



SUNDAY, JANUARY 11, AFTER 8:30 AND 10:30 MASSES

Knights of Columbus invites us to come and enjoy delicious pancakes and great fellowship with our church community.

See you on Sunday!



FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, 6:00 PM

It is a privilege to pray for our priests! Seven Sisters Apostolate has a mission to pray for individual priests in small groups of seven. We invite you to learn more and sign up on January 16 at 6:00 PM at the Family Center.

For more information, contact:
sevensistersdetroit@gmail.com
www.sevensistersapostolate.org

Holy Family

Holy Family
24505 Meadowbrook
Novi, MI 48375
(248) 349-8847
www.holyfamilynovi.org

December 29, 2025

Daily Mass Times

Monday	12:00 pm
Tuesday	9:00 am
Wednesday	12:00 pm
Thursday	9:00 am
Friday	9:00 am

Fr. Bob LaCroix



FRIDAY, JANUARY 23, 7:00 PM

As we encounter our Lord in the Eucharist, sing praises to Jesus, and worship the Lord of Lords, the presence of the Holy Spirit fills the atmosphere. You will sense the Lord's closeness as you are engulfed in His love and mercy.

This is a night of releasing all your anxieties and worries as you allow the Lord to minister to you. We call upon the Holy Spirit and when we call upon Him, He will come!



TUESDAY, JANUARY 27, 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM

Follow Me invites you to experience the joy of a renewed friendship with Christ. In this study you will learn what it takes to follow Christ and discover the joy of divine friendship. You will see how God, and only God, can satisfy the deepest desires of your heart.

Join Mary Austin in this Eight Session Online Course.

RSVP with Katie, kluther@hfnovi.com, 248-349-8847 Ext 232



TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 7:00 - 8:30 PM

Join us for this ****eight-session course**** where we will delve deeper into the Marian doctrines by examining biblical references to Mary.

RSVP with Katie, kluther@hfnovi.com, 248-349-8847 Ext 232



WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 12:30 - 2:30 PM & THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 6:30 - 8:30 PM

We live our lives according to the stories we believe...

What if there is a different story?

The Story is the gospel.

The Rescue Project seeks to proclaim the gospel in a compelling and attractive way over eight weeks in a small group format.

Save the Date! More details to come!



Holy Family
 24505 Meadowbrook
 Novi, MI 48375
 (248) 349-8847
www.holyfamilynovi.org
December 29, 2025

Weekend Mass Times

Saturdays
4:30 pm
6:30 pm **Spanish**

Sundays
8:30 am
10:30 am
12:30 pm

Fr. Bob LaCroix
frbob@hfnovi.com

Janet Díaz
Pastoral Formation Dir.
jdiaz@hfnovi.com

Gabriela Vázquez
Hispanic Ministry Dir.
gvazquez@hfnovi.com

Katie Luther
Evangelization Coord.
kluther@hfnovi.com

Dan Czarniecki
Faith Formation Dir.
dczarniecki@hfnovi.com

Fr. Bob LaCroix



Sponsor a Family

On Saturday, December 20th, over twenty Holy Family volunteers helped load presents in the cars of 58 families who, without the help of this amazing parish, would not have had a Christmas.

Not only did the volunteers greet the families and load the cars with gifts, they offered to pray with each and every family that came by. It was a cold December day, but the cheerful volunteers and the presence of our Lord made it all worth it.

Thank you to all of our families who sponsored, the volunteers who wrapped the gifts and to those who helped on pick-up day, we could not do this program with you!

God Bless,
 Roxanne Hundsrucker





St. James
46325 Ten Mile Rd.
Novi, MI 48374
248-347-7778
www.stjamesnovi.org

December 29, 2025

Weekend Mass Times

Saturdays
4:00 pm

Sundays
8:00 am
9:30 am
11:30 pm

Fr. Ed Zaorski



VERSITI BLOOD DRIVE

Sunday, January 18th • Online Sign Up Available

St. James is hosting a Blood Drive on **Sunday, January 18th** and we need donors! You can save lives by signing up to donate blood. Whole Blood and Double Red Cells signups available from **8:00 am - 1:00 pm**. The Blood Drive will be in the Parish Hall. Signing up is as easy as making a phone call, sending an email or going online:

Go online: https://donateblood.versiti.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/11611256

Call: Sr. Clare at 248-347-7778 ext. 17

Email: dalucclare@sjnovi.net

You are eligible to donate every 57 days. If you have traveled outside of the United States or have any eligibility concerns, be sure to check the Versiti website <https://www.versiti.org/versipass/michigan> or call 877-232-4376 before making an appointment. Please help to make our Blood Drive a success by signing up today!



St. James Food Pantry

The holidays have gone by and we are now beginning our regular monthly food packings as well as assisting those calling in for help with food. In the past few weeks, we have given out 8 emergency food packings.

The food list located on page 4 of this bulletin is updated weekly. We will, of course, accept any non-expired items you may wish to donate.

Thank you for whatever help you can give!

Food Pantry Monthly Packers and Deliverers

A 2026 schedule will be arriving in the next week or so. The first packing of the year will be January 19th through January 21st, with delivery on January 24th. Thank you for your continued commitment to this ministry!





St. James
46325 Ten Mile Rd.
Novi, MI 48374
248-347-7778
www.stjamesnovi.org

December 29, 2025

Daily Mass Times

Monday	9:00 am
Tuesday	9:00 am
Wednesday	7:00 pm
Thursday	None
Friday	None

Fr. Ed Zaorski



PrimeTimers

Are you an adult 50+ looking for fun and to socialize? Please consider joining the PrimeTimers, a group of family of parishes members, singles or couples. Our goal is to meet the spiritual, educational and social needs of our community. Dues are \$10.00 per year per person and the meetings are held once a month in the St James Parish Hall. Our members can enjoy the following:

January 12th at 1:00 pm January Meeting

Join us for a presentation from David Larwa who will tell us some interesting facts about St James the Greater along with the spiritual experience of the journey to Camino Santiago de Compstela, and the walk to St James field of stairs to Spain.

We will also have a white elephant gift extravaganza. Please bring a wrapped unloved Christmas gift to exchange.

January 22nd at 1:00 pm Waltonwood

We have been invited to go to Waltonwood, 27474 Huron Circle, Novi. It is located across from Nordstrom at 12 Oaks Mall. They will serve appetizers and dessert and have a speaker on the topic ' Ringing in the New Year'. A tour of the facility will be available.

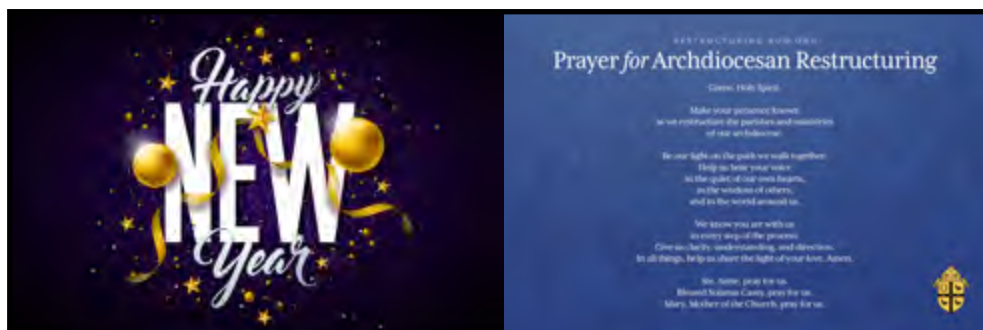
February 9th 12th at 12:00 pm February Meeting

Please come and enjoy some delicious soup and sandwiches. The cost is \$5.00 per person unless you bring a crockpot of homemade soup - then it is free. We will also have a special guest speaker. You may sign up and pay at the January meeting or send your check to: Marge Jonesku, 234 Winslow Circle, Commerce Township, 48390.

March 9th 12th at 12:00 pm March Meeting

We are having our traditional St Patrick's Day Irish luncheon. There is a \$20.00 charge per person. You may sign up and pay at the January meeting or send your check to: Marge Jonesku, 234 Winslow Circle, Commerce Township, 48390.

**Any questions - call Pat Woody
at 847-217-0515**





St.
Joseph

St. Joseph
830 S Lafayette St.
South Lyon, MI 48178
(248) 446-8700
www.stjcc.org

December 29, 2025

Daily Mass Times

Monday	None
Tuesday	7:00 pm
Wednesday	9:00 am
Thursday	None
Friday	9:00 am

Fr. Stan Tokarski



Join us for The Solemnity of
Mary, The Holy Mother of God



MASS TIMES

Wednesday, December 31st | 5 PM

Thursday, January 1st | 11 AM

Knights of Columbus Rosary



January 3rd & 4th

Join us for the Rosary
led by the Knights of
Columbus before
each Mass this
weekend.

Pray with us on
Saturday at 4:25 PM
and Sunday at 7:25,
9:25, or 11:25 AM.

St. Joseph Prayer Ministry



January 4th

Our Prayer Ministry team
will be available in the
back of the church
following the 10 AM &
Noon Masses.

Putting Out Into the Deep MARRIAGE NIGHT

Monday, January 12th
7 - 9 PM | MPR

Learn More & Register:
stjcc.org/marriage-night



St. Joseph
Catholic Parish
South Lyon, Michigan





St. Joseph
830 S Lafayette St.
South Lyon, MI 48178
(248) 446-8700
www.stjcc.org

December 29, 2025

Weekend Mass Times

Saturdays
5:00 pm

Sundays
8:00 am
10:00 am
12:00 pm

Fr. Stan Tokarski



**The Liturgy
of The Hours**

Learn the rich
history and how to
pray The Liturgy
of the Hours.

Monday, January 19th
7-9 PM | MPR

Sign Up:
stjcc.org/LOTH

Listen to Miles Christi Priest,
Fr. Patrick Wainwright's latest
For College Catholics Podcast
"Growing Closer to Christ During the
Christmas Season"

<https://tinyurl.com/for-college-catholics>

FOR COLLEGE CATHOLICS
PODCAST |

cfcs
CATHOLIC FUNERAL
SOCIETY SERVICES

End of Life Workshop at St. Joseph Parish
Saturday, January 24th | 9 AM - 3 PM
Sign up at tinyurl.com/cfcs-workshop

**the
RESCUE
project**

WHY DID HE COME?
WHAT DID HE DO?
WHY DOES IT MATTER?

**LEARN
MORE
AND
SIGN UP**

**DISCOVER THE HEART OF THE GOSPEL
THROUGH THE RESCUE PROJECT**

**8-WEEK EXPERIENCE
STARTING JANUARY 26TH**

MONDAYS | 7-9 PM | MPR

Learn More & Sign Up at
stjcc.org/the-rescue-project

St. Joseph Parish | 830 S. Lafayette | South Lyon, 48178



St. William
 531 Common St.
 Walled Lake, MI 48390
 (248) 624-1421
www.stwilliam.com

December 29, 2025

Fr. Michael Savickas





SCHOOL LIFE

A Community of Faith, Family, and Learning

www.stwilliam-school.com



So Proud of our Crusaderbots!

At the first competition of the season, our SW middle school team brought home a 2nd Place Sustain Award, a 2nd Place Innovate Award, and an invitation to the State Competition! Our 3-5th grade team also brought home a trophy, placing 2nd Place in Robot Design! A BIG THANK YOU to our SW Dads' Club for supporting our FIRST Robotics Programs K-8!






ST. WILLIAM CATHOLIC SCHOOL
 AFFORDABLE TUITION CAMPAIGN FUNDRAISING GALA 2026

Saturday, March 21 6:00 - 11:00pm
 Sherandoth Country Club, 5600 Walnut Lake Rd, West Bloomfield

WAYS TO SUPPORT



- BECOME A SPONSOR
- PURCHASE TICKETS
- MAKE A DONATION
- DONATE AN AUCTION ITEM

TICKET SALES NOW OPEN!

Scan above to support the SWCS 2026 Gala
 or e-mail Director of Advancement, Stacy Verge
sverge@stwilliam-school.com

Family Eucharistic Adoration

First & Third Sundays of the month
 2-4 p.m.



2-2:30 p.m.: Small, restless & fidgety children welcome!
 The first 1/2 hour is designed for parents with small children.
 Borrow a "busy hands" coloring and activity bag to help little ones focus.

2:30-4 p.m.: Adult adoration.
 Silent adoration time and group prayers. Worship aids available.



St. William
531 Common St.
Walled Lake, MI 48390
(248) 624-1421
www.stwilliam.com

December 29, 2025

Daily Mass Times

Monday	None
Tuesday	8:00 am
Wednesday	8:00 am
Thursday	8:00 am
Friday	None

Fr. Michael Savickas



SAVE THE DATE

“The Mary Question”

**A stumbling block for
some Christians ...**

**For others, she is the
gateway to salvation
through her Son.**

**Come discover and explore the astounding
biblical foundations of Mary, Mother of God, with
Deacon Mike Chesley of St. William Parish**

**Friday, January 30, 2026, at 6:30 PM
St. William Parish in Walled Lake**

A pasta dinner will be served at the event.

**Kindly RSVP beginning January 1st until January
21st by email to: STWOneVoice@gmail.com.**

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Winter 2026



St. Catherine of Siena Academy is now accepting applications on a rolling basis for the 2026-2027 school year. We welcome families to apply and learn more about our mission to educate and empower young women. Visit saintcatherineacademy.org/admissions today!

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January 17



Couples who
PRAY together,
STAY together

God Chose You For Me

A new Experience unlocking the power of the sacrament of marriage.
Realize God's call to a relationship of unity and holiness,
and create a lasting personal prayer for your relationship!

Date: January 17, 2026
Time: 9 am - 4 pm
Where: St. William Parish
531 Common St.
Walled Lake, MI



Pre-registration required
\$100 per couple
Register at wwme.org or
Call Amy & Joe Kopacz
517-667-0433

"IT'S LIKE WATERING YOUR MARRIAGE GARDEN WITH MIRACLE GROW"
-Karen & Dave



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January 21



“The Mary Question”

A stumbling block
for some
Christians...

for others, she is
the gateway to
salvation through
her Son.

Come discover and explore the astounding biblical foundations of Mary, Mother of God, with Deacon Mike Chesley of St. William Parish.

Friday, January 30, 2026, at 6:30 pm

St. William Parish in Walled Lake

A pasta dinner will be served at the event.



Deacon Mike Chesley was ordained to the permanent diaconate by Cardinal Adam Maida in 2005, out of Sacred Heart Major Seminary. The deacon has served in two AOD parishes and as the delegate for prison ministry. He is the current deacon and pastoral associate at St. William Parish. Deacon Mike has extensive expertise in biblical and scriptural history and ancient Greek.

ST. WILLIAM
Parish & School



Kindly RSVP by January 21st. Use
this QR Code or send an email to:
STWOneVoice@gmail.com



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January 30

Attention Singles!

(ages mid-30s to 50s)



Interested in...

making new Catholic friends?
renewing your relationship with God?
finding peace & meaning for your life?

If so, attend the next
REFLECT Catholic Retreat
for single men & women at the
St. Francis Retreat Center, DeWitt, MI
(10 miles north of Lansing)

REFLECT is for and about single men & women (mid-30s to 50s) looking to connect with others who also face the unique challenges of being a mid-life single in a couple's world. It's a great way to get to know & share with others in a caring, Christ-centered environment.

The next REFLECT weekend is Jan 30 - Feb 1, 2026.

Cost is \$240.00 for a single-occupancy bedroom, meals, and materials.

Step outside of your comfort zone & into a wonderful opportunity for personal growth. TAKE A CHANCE & GET INVOLVED... you won't regret it!

Celebrating 22 years
of Catholic Retreats
for Mid-life Singles
2004 - 2026



For details, visit www.ReflectRetreat.com,
e-mail reflect.michigan@gmail.com,
or call (586) 770-1772.



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February 15-21



ICONOGRAPHY RETREAT for beginners

February 15-21, 2026

In this retreat, you will learn how to paint an icon of an angel. We will use traditional egg tempera and genuine gold leaf on gessoed wooden panels. At the end of the retreat, you'll be able to take home a beautiful icon painted by yourself, the fruit of many hours of hard work and prayer.

You do not need to have any professional art training or prior experience in icon painting. The only expectation is your willingness to learn something new and to immerse in an ancient and sacred tradition of iconography, to enter into a deeper relationship with God.



\$920 for single bedroom
\$620 for commuters
(meals and all supplies included)



Registration and more info:
248-651-4826
www.capretreat.org



Brother Thomas Skowron is a Capuchin Franciscan friar. He began painting icons in 2017. Br. Thomas studied at Eikonon Schola in Uzhgorod, Ukraine, an iconography school of the Greek Catholic Eparchy of Mukachevo and the Capuchin Custody of Ukraine and Russia, as well as with Fr. Anthony Gurin and George Kordis. He focuses on classical Byzantine and Neo-Byzantine iconography and traditional technique of egg tempera, but he's also interested in contemporary trends, in particular in the art of Jerzy Nowosielski and new iconography of Lviv, Ukraine.

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July 22



RISING
FROM THE ASHES REVIVAL

Huntington Place, Detroit



**RISING.
REVIVED.
RENEWED.**

risingrevival.org



July 22, 2026

This is more than an event—it's a call to rise. Experience the fire of renewal and the living water of grace at Detroit's Eucharistic Revival.

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Summer 2026



Young men and women, ages 18-30, are invited to join us for the adventure of a lifetime!

Journey alongside PIME Missionaries Fr. Piero Masolo, Fr. Daniele Criscione, and a religious sister as we travel to the PIME Mission in Mexico!

Located in the state of Guerrero, the PIME Missionaries serve the isolated, indigenous communities in the mountainous area around Acapulco.

Price: \$990 per traveler, which includes airfare from Detroit to Mexico City, and all other travel and food expenses during the trip.



Scan the QR Code to learn more and to sign up!

www.pimeusa.org/vocations

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Fall 2026

Pilgrimage to Ireland October 19 - 29, 2026



Only \$5,795/person*



www.nobiletravel.com/2026-ireland-frtony-fred

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His prophetic voice, pastoral style and rich magisterium have marked the church's journey in recent years, encouraging us above all to place God's mercy at the center, to give renewed impetus to evangelization, and to be a joyful church, welcoming to all and attentive to the poorest," the U.S.-born pope said.

Pope Leo then focused his talk on two fundamental themes of Pope Francis' 2013 apostolic exhortation "Evangelii Gaudium" ("The Joy of the Gospel"): mission and communion.

He told the Curia officials that the church's very nature is to be "outward-looking, turned toward the world, missionary," in order to bring the good news of God's love to all people.

"The church exists to invite and gather all people to the festive banquet that the Lord prepares for us," he said, so "every person can discover their identity as a beloved child, a brother or sister to their neighbor, and a new creation in Christ."

"Transformed by this discovery, they become witnesses to truth, justice and peace," he said.

For that reason, he said, "we need an ever more missionary Roman Curia, in which institutions, offices and tasks are conceived in light of today's major ecclesial, pastoral and social challenges, and not merely to ensure ordinary administration," to better serve local churches and their pastors.

When it comes to communion, he said, Christmas is an important reminder that "Jesus came to reveal the true face of God as Father, so that we might all become his children and therefore brothers and sisters to one another."

God's love, revealed by Jesus, enables all members of the Catholic Church "to be a sign of a new humanity no longer founded on selfishness and individualism, but on mutual love and solidarity," Pope Leo said.

The task of fostering greater communion both within the church and in the world "is urgent," he said.

Communion in the church is always a challenge, he said, because of "forces of division" that may sometimes be at play. "We can fall into the temptation of swinging between two opposite extremes: uniformity that fails to value differences, or the exacerbation of differences and viewpoints instead of seeking communion."

"Thus, in interpersonal relationships, in internal office dynamics, or in addressing questions of faith, liturgy, morality and more besides, there is a risk of falling into rigidity or ideology, with their consequent conflicts," Pope Leo said.

Members of the church are called to "conversion," and to remember, "though many and diverse," they are members of the one body of Christ as "brothers and sisters in him," he said.

"This communion is built not so much through words and documents as through concrete gestures and attitudes that ought to appear in our daily lives, including in our work," he said.

Pope Leo warned against "bitterness" that may build up in those who, after many years of service in the Curia, "observe with disappointment that certain dynamics -- linked to the exercise of power, the desire to prevail, or the pursuit of personal interests -- are slow to change."

He encouraged officials to seek "genuine fraternal friendship" and to pray for personal conversion and the "grace to find trustworthy friends, where masks fall away, no one is used or sidelined, genuine support is offered, and each person's worth and competence are respected, preventing resentment and dissatisfaction."

When members of the Curia and the wider church live this way, he said, it also becomes a sign to "a world wounded by discord, violence and conflict, where we also witness a growth in aggression and anger, often exploited by both the digital sphere and politics."

"The Lord's birth brings the gift of peace and invites us to become its prophetic sign in a human and cultural context that is too fragmented," he said.

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After meeting with the Curia leaders, the pope went to the Vatican audience hall where he greeted hundreds of employees of the Vatican and the Diocese of Rome and their families. He spent almost 30 minutes walking along the barriers, greeting and speaking with those in attendance, and blessing babies and children.

In his speech, he encouraged employees and their families to learn from Jesus "the style of simplicity and humility, and let us all work together to ensure that this is increasingly the style of the church in all its expressions."

"Sometimes we are so caught up in our activities that we do not think about the Lord or the church," he said. "But the very fact of working with dedication, trying to do our best, and also -- for you lay people -- with love for your family, for your children, gives glory to the Lord."



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