



Archbishop Shelton's Pastoral Reflections

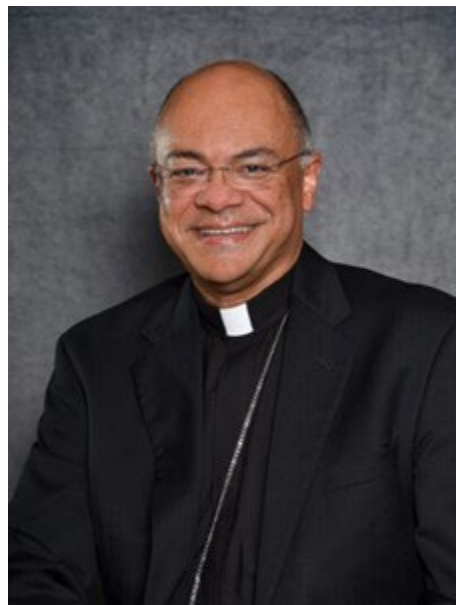
May 2025

Habemus Papam (We Have a Pope)!

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The joy of this Easter season has increased greatly with the announcement of the election of our new Holy Father Pope Leo XIV. On behalf of all the people who live in 24 counties of the Archdiocese of Louisville, I welcome Pope Leo with open arms and with a heart filled with gratitude to our Risen Lord for sending us a new shepherd to feed us, his sheep (cf. Jn 21:1–19).

The election of a pope who was born here in the United States was a surprise, but a joyful one. Our faith here in this country, which is a relatively young country, a relatively young faith, has now produced a gift for all Catholics in the world, Pope Leo XIV. Our new Holy Father's first words to the world were, "Peace be with you," the first words Jesus spoke after the resurrection.



In his first address to the world, Pope Leo XIV said that we must strive to be a missionary church, and that was one of the important things for Pope Francis as well. We must be a Church that builds bridges, one that embraces dialogue, and one that welcomes all with open arms. A pope's first statement to the world indicates in a powerful way what he hopes to be about and what he hopes to involve himself in, and these first statements of our new pope are very powerful!

This is a time of transition for our Church. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Cardinals representing all regions of the world have prayed, deliberated, and selected Pope Leo XIV to serve as the successor of Saint Peter. We pray that he will be blessed with the same qualities of holiness and wisdom that his recent predecessors have shown.

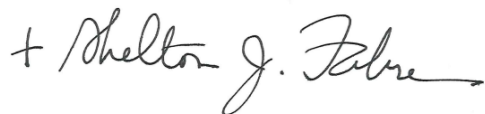
I hope he is able to continue to have the pastoral heart of Pope Francis; I hope he has the intellectual, philosophical ability of Pope John Paul II, and I hope he has the theological insight of Pope Benedict. As the successor of St. Peter, I think he will bring all those things to his ministry. And we trust that God will grant him gifts of humility, patience, purity of heart, and obedience to the Divine will as he seeks to promote the good of Christ's Mystical Body, the Church.

Pope Francis was known for speaking Truth, even if it meant receiving criticism. He advocated for what is morally correct, for those who are marginalized, and for those who have no voice. Pope Francis constantly reminded all of us to love and welcome everyone we meet because they are the face of Christ. Let us pray that Pope Leo will continue to serve God's people in this same spirit, but with his own distinctive gifts and priorities. Let us promise to listen to him, to trust his judgment, and to follow him with confidence in his pastoral leadership.

As the new Vicar of Christ, may Pope Leo XIV provide the Church with the spiritual gifts and resources we need to build up the Kingdom of God. May he always be a visible sign of our communion in Christ and our unity as his Church. And may he inspire us to be faithful, and joyful, missionary disciples of the Risen Lord.

I invite you to join me in praying for our new Holy Father—now and throughout his Petrine ministry of service to God's people everywhere.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, starting with a cross symbol and reading "Shelton J. Fabre".

Most Reverend Shelton J. Fabre
Archbishop of Louisville

Pope Leo XIV



Statement from Archbishop Shelton J. Fabre

I want to extend my prayerful best wishes to Pope Leo XIV, the successor to St. Peter and Vicar of Christ. This is a historical and spiritual moment for the Catholic Church, and for the Church in America as he is the first pope born in the United States. The process of choosing the Holy Father was done with prayer and discernment by the cardinal electors who were led by the Holy Spirit. I rejoice in their decision, and I am filled with hope for the future of the Catholic Church.

I believe Pope Leo XIV will build on the ministry of his predecessors. In his first greeting as Supreme Pontiff, he said, "Peace be with you," the words of Jesus Christ spoken on Easter morning. He then shared that he wants to build bridges, to dialogue and to be inclusive, which speaks to how he will lead the People of God.

Please join me in praying for Pope Leo XIV as he begins his new Petrine Ministry. May God grant him the strength and leadership to strengthen the unity of the Church and to advance peace in our world.

I invite you to join me for a **Mass of Thanksgiving for Pope Leo XIV** on Monday, May 12 at 6 p.m. at the Cathedral of the Assumption. Together, we will lift up the Holy Father with our prayers as he starts his papacy.

Statement from Archbishop Emeritus Joseph Kurtz

With great joy I join with Catholics and all people of good will throughout the world in thanking God for the gift of our newly elected Pope Leo XIV. Born in Chicago and serving the Church as an Augustinian priest and pastoral Bishop, our Holy Father has been prepared well for the pastoral leadership and service as a successor of St. Peter. I came to know and befriend him during the Synod on Evangelization in October of 2012 when he served as a peritus (expert) and I as a delegate. Together we formulated the summaries of the small English language group that was part of the proceedings of the Synod. Blessed with a welcoming spirit, he showed himself to be a humble, intelligent and very pastoral person. May Pope Leo XIV serve Christ and His people humbly and unselfishly and may the Holy Spirit inspire our Holy Father to lead and serve as the Vicar of Christ on earth.

Bio for Pope Leo XIV

Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost, O.S.A., Prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops, Archbishop-Bishop emeritus of Chiclayo, was born on 14 September 1955 in Chicago (Illinois, United States). IN 1977 he entered the novitiate of the Order of Saint Augustine (O.S.A.) in the province of Our Lady of Good Counsel, in Saint Louis. On 29 August 1981 he gave his solemn vows. He studied at the Catholic Theological Union of Chicago, receiving a diploma in theology.

At the age of 27 he was sent by the Order to Rome to study canon law at the Pontifical Saint Thomas Aquinas University (Angelicum). He received priestly ordination on 19 June 1982. He received his licentiate in 1984, and was then sent to work in the mission of Chulucanas, in Piura, Peru (1985-1986).

In 1987 he was awarded a doctorate with the thesis: "The role of the local prior in the Order of Saint Augustine". In the same year he was elected director of vocations and director of the missions of the Augustinian province of "Mother of Good Counsel" of Olympia Fields, Illinois, United States of America. In 1988 he was sent to the mission of Trujillo as director of the joint formation project for Augustinian aspirants in the Vicariates of Chulucanas, Iquitos and Apurímac. There he served as community prior (1988-1992), director of formation (1988-1998) and teacher of the professed (1992-1998). In the archdiocese of Trujillo he was judicial vicar (1989-1998), and professor of canon, patristic and moral law in the "San Carlos e San Marcelo" Major Seminary.

In 1999 he was elected provincial prior of the "Mother of Good Counsel" province, Chicago. After two and a half years, the ordinary general Chapter elected him prior

general, a ministry again entrusted to him in the 2007 ordinary general Chapter. In October 2013 he returned to his province (Chicago) to serve as teacher of the professed and provincial vicar, roles he held 3 November 2014, when Pope Francis appointed him apostolic administrator of the diocese of Chiclayo, Peru, elevating him to the dignity of bishop and assigning him the titular diocese of Sufar. On 7 November he took canonical possession of the diocese in the presence of the apostolic nuncio James Patrick Green; he was ordained a bishop on 12 December, Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, in the cathedral of his diocese. He served as bishop of Chiclayo from 26 November 2015. In March 2018 he became second vice president of the Peruvian Episcopal Conference. Pope Francis appointed him a member of the Congregation for the Clergy in 2019, and member of the Congregation for Bishops in 2020.

On 15 April 2020, the Pope appointed him apostolic administrator of the diocese of Callao.

On 30 January 2023, Pope Francis appointed Cardinal Prevost as prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops and president of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America.

On 6 February 2025, Pope Francis elevated Cardinal Prevost to Cardinal-Bishop within the College of Cardinals.



First “Urbi et Orbi” Blessing of the Holy Father Leo XIV

Peace be with you all!

Dear brothers and sisters, this is the first greeting of the Risen Christ, the good shepherd who gave his life for God’s flock. I too would like this greeting of peace to enter into your heart, to reach your families, all people, wherever they may be, all peoples, all the earth. Peace be with you!

This is the peace of the Risen Christ, a disarmed and disarming peace, a humble and preserving peace. It comes from God. God, who loves all of us, without any limits or conditions. We still keep in our ears the weak but always courageous voice of Pope Francis, who blessed Rome - the Pope who blessed Rome and the world that day on Easter morning.

Allow me to continue that same blessing. God loves us, all of us, evil will not prevail. We are all in God’s hands. Therefore, without fear, united, hand in hand with God and among ourselves, let us go forward. We are disciples of Christ, Christ goes before us, and the world needs his light. Humanity needs him like a bridge to reach God and his

love. You too, help us to build bridges with dialogue, with encounter, uniting us all so as to be one people always in peace. Thank you, Pope Francis!

I also wish to thank all my Cardinal brothers who chose me to be the Successor of Peter and to walk together with you, as a united Church always seeking peace and justice, always seeking to work as men and women faithful to Jesus Christ, without fear, to proclaim the Gospel, to be missionaries.

I am an Augustinian, a son of Saint Augustine, who said: “With you I am a Christian and for you a bishop”. In this sense, we can all work together towards that homeland that God has prepared for us.

To the Church of Rome, a special greeting! [Applause]. We must strive together to be a missionary Church, building bridges, dialogue, always open to receiving with open arms for everyone, like this square, open to all, to all who need our charity, our presence, dialogue and love.

And if I may also say a word, a greeting to everyone, and in particular to my dear diocese of Chiclayo, in Peru, where a faithful people have accompanied their bishop, shared their faith and given so much, in order to continue to be the faithful Church of Jesus Christ.

To all of you, brothers and sisters of Rome, of Italy, of all the world, we want to be a synodal Church, a Church on the move, a Church that always strives for peace, that always strives for charity, that always strives to be close, especially to those who suffer.

Today is the day of the *Supplica* to Our Lady of Pompeii. Our Mother Mary always wants to walk with us, to stay close, to help us with her intercession and her love.

So, I would like to pray with you. Let us pray together for this new mission, for all the Church, for peace in the world, and let us ask Mary, our Mother, for this special grace.

My Prayer for You

Please join me in praying for our new Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, using these words from the Roman missal:

O God, who in your providential design
willed that your Church be built
upon blessed Peter, whom you set over the other Apostles,
look with favor, we pray, on Leo, our Pope
and grant that he, whom you have made Peter's successor,
may be for your people a visible source and foundation
of unity in faith and of communion.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, forever and ever.

Amen.