



DIOCESE OF ST. AUGUSTINE

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For Immediate Release

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A Statement from Bishop Erik Pohlmeier on the Election of a New Pope!

Jacksonville, Fla. – With deep gratitude to the Holy Spirit, I join the faithful of the Diocese of St. Augustine and Catholics around the world in joyfully welcoming our new Holy Father, Pope Robert Francis Prevost, now Pope Leo XIV.

It is a great honor for the Church in the United States to offer a son of the faith to serve the Universal Church. It is also a moment of special pride for our local Church, as Pope Leo XIV comes from the Augustinian Order, whose rich spiritual tradition is closely tied to our diocesan patron, St. Augustine. May our new pope reflect well the wisdom and pastoral heart of that great saint.

The election of a new pope is always a sacred moment in the life of the Church—a time of unity, hope and renewed purpose. As the successor of Saint Peter, Pope Leo XIV assumes the great responsibility of guiding the People of God during a time marked by both great opportunity and deep challenge.

In a world often shaped by secularism and cultural confusion, many hearts are longing for truth, healing, and a renewed encounter with Jesus Christ. Pope Leo XIV is called to proclaim the Gospel with clarity and compassion, to promote the dignity of every human life, to encourage vocations and to strengthen family life with the love of a shepherd.

By choosing the name Leo XIV, the Holy Father signals a deep commitment to the Church's social teaching. This is a call to all of us to deepen our own commitment to a life of charity and service, inspired by the Gospel and guided by the Church's wisdom.

I invite all Catholics in our diocese to lift Pope Leo XIV in prayer. May the Lord grant him courage, wisdom and peace as he begins his ministry. May his leadership bring unity to the Church and draw people everywhere into deeper communion with Christ.

We entrust our new pope to the maternal care of Mary, Mother of the Church, and to the protection of St. Joseph. May their intercession guide and strengthen him in the days ahead.

*+Most Rev. Erik Pohlmeier
Bishop of the Diocese of St. Augustine*

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