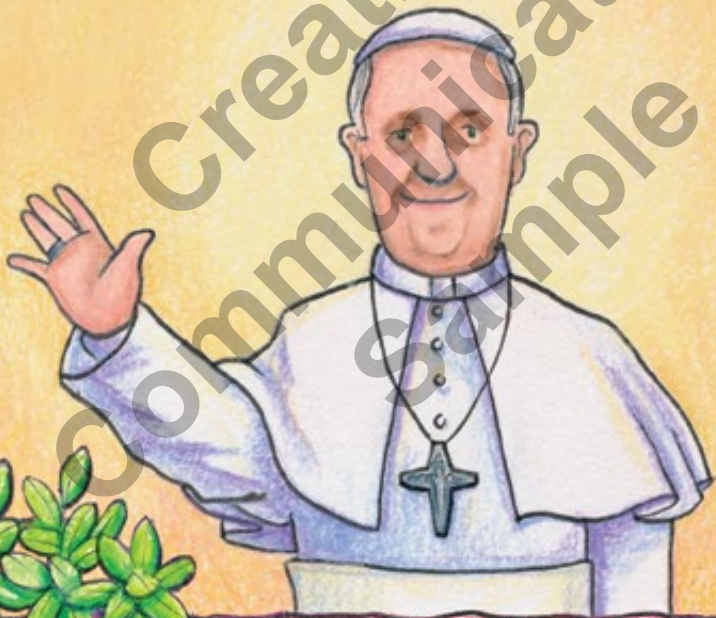


Meet Pope Francis



Pope Francis

Our Holy Father

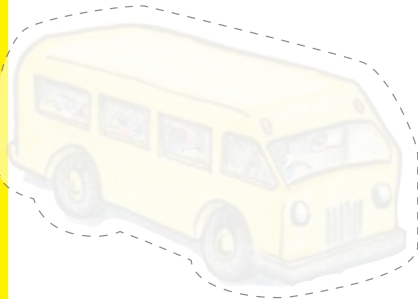


Pope Francis is many things to many people. To Catholics, he is Christ's representative—the shepherd who leads and teaches God's people. To world leaders, he is a voice for justice who helps bring countries together in peace. Even people who aren't Christian admire Pope Francis for his humility, honesty and love for the poor and forgotten.

In all of these ways, Pope Francis is doing his job as the Vicar of Christ. But there's much more to Pope Francis. For instance, did you know he loves soccer, rode the bus and knows how to cook? Why not get to know our 266th pope a little better?

Pope Francis Says

"A simple lifestyle is good for us, helping us to better share with those in need."



Shepherd, leader and...cook?

Our Holy Father was born on December 17, 1936. His parents, Mario and Regina Bergoglio (Burr-GO-lee-o), had moved from Italy to Argentina, a country in South America. They raised five children just outside the capital city of Buenos Aires, naming their eldest son Jorge Mario.



To earn money for college, Jorge swept floors and worked as a doorman at a nightclub. When he decided to become a priest, Jorge chose the community known as the **Society of Jesus, or Jesuits.**

Even after he was chosen to lead Buenos Aires as archbishop and as a cardinal, Father Bergoglio never forgot how to work hard. He also remembered Jesus' words: "Blessed are the poor in spirit" (Matthew 5:3). So instead of living in a fancy house with lots of help, he lived in a tiny apartment, cooked his own food and rode the bus to work. "My people are poor," Cardinal Bergoglio said. "And I am one of them."

Pope Francis also:



Loves soccer,
especially the San
Lorenzo de Almagro
football club

Hola! Ciao!

**Speaks Spanish and
Italian fluently;**

also knows Latin
and some German,
French, Portuguese,
English and Ukrainian



Is the
first Jesuit
pope, and
**the first
pope from
the Americas**

Traveling for Christ

Almost everything Pope Francis does is meant to teach or remind us how to follow Jesus. So when the pope travels around the world, he is sharing Jesus' love, especially with the poor and suffering. He has visited the Philippines to meet survivors of a typhoon, and he has traveled to the Holy Land, calling for peace and unity there.



Wherever Pope Francis goes, crowds greet him in record numbers. At World Youth Day in Brazil, more than one million people camped out on the beach to attend a Mass said by Pope Francis.

Pope Francis doesn't let bad weather or danger stop him from connecting with the people he loves so much. For instance, when he traveled to the Philippines, despite heavy rain and strong winds, he simply wore a plastic poncho over his papal vestments while saying Mass. When crowds mobbed his vehicle in Brazil, reaching into his car and causing a traffic jam, Pope Francis saw it as a chance to greet people in person. He smiled, laughed, shook hands, kissed babies and, of course, hugged people!



You're Invited!

When riding in the official papal vehicle, called the "popemobile," Pope Francis prefers the model with an open top so he can reach out to the crowd instead of one with bulletproof glass that closes him off from everyone. Although it's probably safer, he says the closed-top car makes him feel like he's in a sardine can! Once he even lifted up two boys from the crowd and gave them a ride for a few blocks!



Just like those two boys, Pope Francis invites all of us to go on a faith journey with him. We don't have to go far to spread Jesus' love, and we don't have to be afraid, either. "Dear young people," Pope Francis says, "Jesus loves you, he wants to be your friend. If you are convinced of this, surely you know to spread the joy of this friendship to all: at home, in the parish, at school, with your friends."

So how will you spread the joy of Jesus' friendship to everyone?

Pope Francis Says

"Where does Jesus send us? There are no borders, no limits: he sends us to everyone. The Gospel is for everyone, not just for some... Do not be afraid to go and to bring Christ into every area of life, to the fringes of society, even to those who seem farthest away."

Meet Pope Francis

Pope Francis is loved and respected not only by Catholics but many Christians and non-Christians everywhere. For many he has

become the voice of justice and peace in a troubled world. His unwavering support for the poor and forgotten has endeared him to all. This booklet includes information on Pope Francis' life, his duties as pope, his travels throughout the world as well as his deep love of Jesus. Colorful stickers makes learning about Pope Francis a fun experience!

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