

Meet Pope Leo XIV



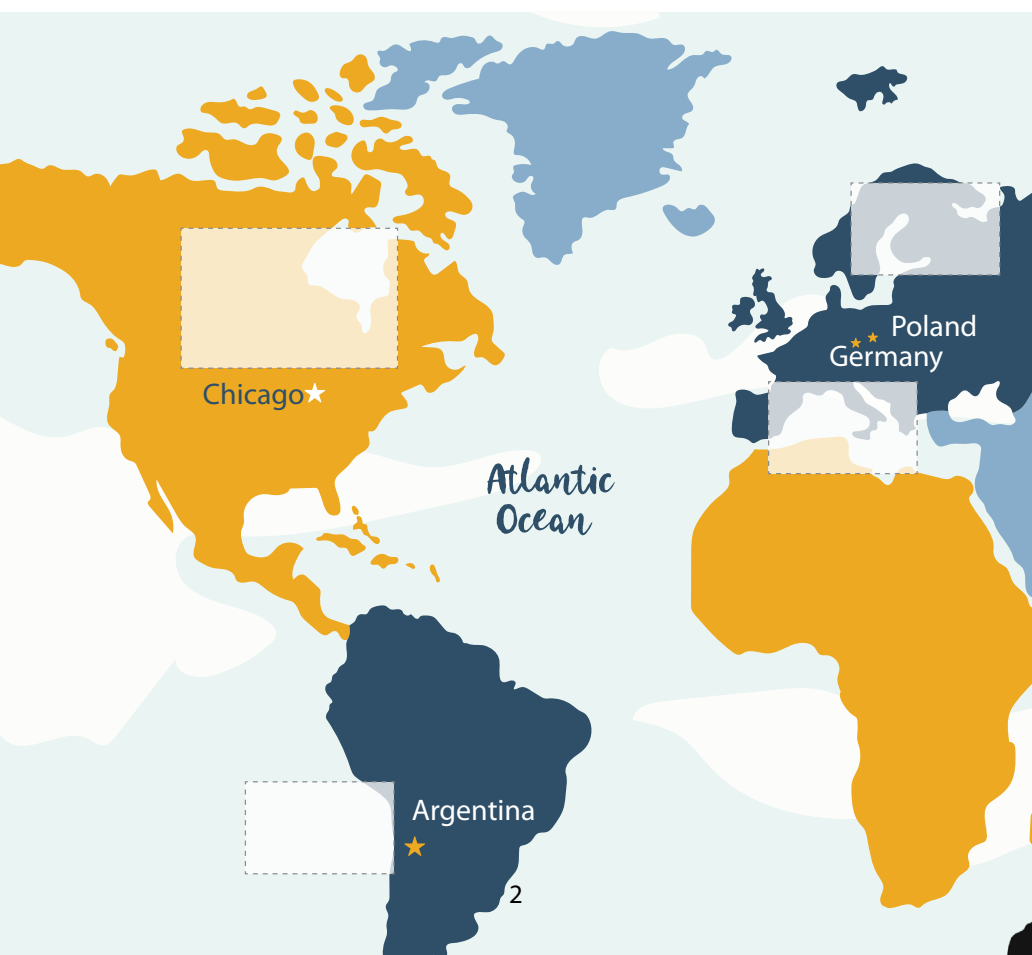
The First Pope Born in the USA

Let's Get to Know Pope Leo XIV

Poland...Germany...Argentina...Chicago, USA?

Jesus' friends live in every corner of the world. So, of course, our pope can come from anywhere too. But it was still a surprise, on May 8, 2025, when the name of the Cardinal elected to be the 267th pope was announced: Cardinal Robert Prevost, who was born and had grown up in the United States!

What an exciting surprise that was! But there's more to Pope Leo than being an American. Why did he take the name Leo? What did he do during the many years he lived in Peru? Which saints are important to him? What sports does he like? (Hint: You use a racquet to play it.) Let's get to know our Holy Father!



Robert Prevost was born on September 14, 1955, the youngest of three brothers. The Prevost boys went to Catholic schools. They usually went to Mass before school, too, and Robert was an altar server.

Robert attended a high school of the Augustinian religious order and then a college run by them too: Villanova University. He majored in math in college, but for a long time, he had been hearing God's call to the priesthood. He was ordained a priest in 1982 in—you guessed it—the Augustinian order!



**Pope
Leo
Says**

**From
an early
age, I
was taught
that Jesus is always
near, that He is your
best friend, and
Mass was a way to
find that friend, to
be with Jesus.**

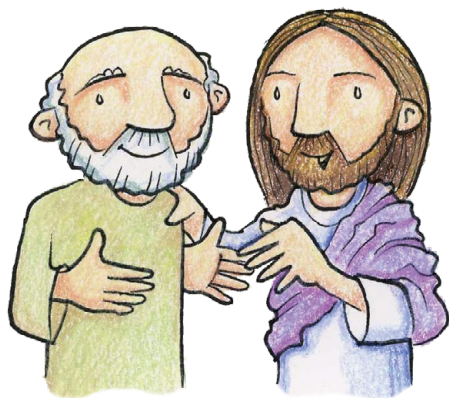


As a young priest, Pope Leo XIV was known as Fr. Robert Prevost. Image credit: OSV News photo / Augustinian Province of Our Mother of Good Counsel.

The Pope's Ministry and Mission

Is it really that important?

The pope is the Bishop of Rome. But more importantly, he is Christ's representative on earth and the leader of the whole Church. Jesus called apostles to lead in his name, and among them, he chose Peter for a big job. "You are Peter," Jesus said, "and upon this rock I will build my church." Jesus gave Peter "the keys to the kingdom of heaven" and told him, "Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven" (Matthew 16:18-19).



Peter and the apostles, with authority from Jesus, led the Church. They also chose leaders to succeed them after they died. That means each pope is a successor to St. Peter. Nowadays there are more than one billion Catholics in the world. So as a leader and Christ's representative, Pope Leo has a pretty big job!

**Pope
Leo
Says**

A speech bubble with a black outline and a white background, containing the text 'Pope Leo Says' in red, bold, sans-serif font.

**May the Lord grant
me the grace to respond
faithfully to his call.**

The background of the page is a photograph of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. Overlaid on the image is a large, light-colored watermark of a key, which is the symbol of the papacy. The text 'May the Lord grant me the grace to respond faithfully to his call.' is written in white, bold, sans-serif font on a dark orange rectangular background at the bottom.

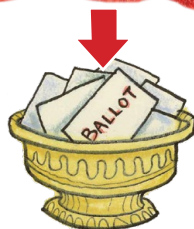
How does he get the job?

After a pope dies or resigns, cardinals from all over the world travel to Rome to elect a new pope. They gather in the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican for a meeting called a conclave.

The cardinals pray, discuss papal candidates and vote. If no candidate receives two-thirds of the votes, the ballots are burned, and black smoke rises from the Chapel's chimney. When a pope is chosen, the ballots are still burned, but now it's time for white smoke to stream out into the sky.

Habemus Papam! (We have a pope!)

Just as Jesus gave Simon the name of Peter, popes take a new name. Pope Leo tells us that he wants to help the Church to be a strong voice for God's love and truth in challenging times, when life is changing fast. From 1878 to 1903, Pope Leo XIII led the Church in times of great change in the world too. It seemed right, our new pope has said, to follow in his footsteps—as Leo XIV!

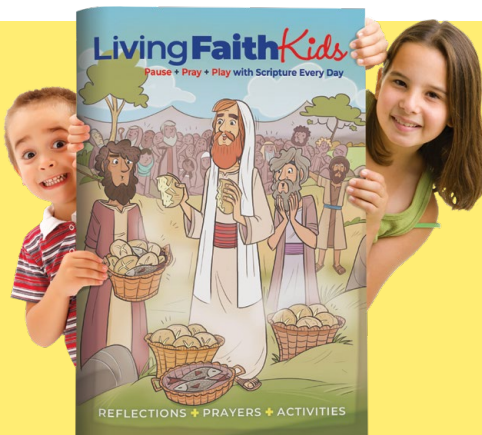


Place the
ballots for
Robert Prevost
to become
pope here.

Meet Pope Leo XIV

The Catholic Church and the world welcomed Pope Leo XIV on May 8, 2025. Discover interesting facts about his life and priesthood before he became the pope. Plus learn about the pope's special role and mission in the Church—with sticker fun and activities.

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