



Pope Leo XIV: ‘Let us walk towards God and love one another’

Pope Leo XIV presides at the Mass of Inauguration of his Petrine Ministry in Saint Peter’s Square, and invites the Church to walk together along the path of God’s love and remain united in one family.

Heart full of gratitude

Expressing his heartfelt gratitude for the prayerful and joyful support offered to him as he begins his pastoral ministry as Pope, Leo XIV recalled the intense emotions experienced over these past few weeks.

“Following the death of Pope Francis, we felt like sheep without a shepherd,” he recalled, “yet having received his final blessing on Easter Sunday, and with eyes of faith, hope, and joy, we remembered how the Lord never abandons His people.”

The Pope also thanked everyone for accompanying in prayer the College of Cardinals meeting in conclave to elect the Successor of Peter as they looked at how to continue the mission of preaching the Gospel with a shepherd able to address today’s challenges. He said they felt “the working of the Holy Spirit, who was able to bring us into harmony, like musical instruments, so that our heartstrings could vibrate in a single melody.”

United in love and unity

“I was chosen, without any merit of my own, and now, with fear and trembling,” said Pope Leo, “I come to you as a brother, who desires to be the servant of your faith and your joy, walking with you on the path of God’s love, for he wants us all to be united in one family.”

Pope Leo XIV recalled how love and unity are the two aspects of the mission entrusted to Peter by Jesus. In the Gospel on this Sunday, Jesus entrusts the disciples to continue the mission, to be “fishers of men” and bring the “hope of the Gospel” to all people “so that all may experience God’s embrace.” Peter’s experience of the “infinite and unconditional love of God” enabled him to take up this mission, the Pope explained.

Church, sign of unity and communion

The Holy Father expressed his hope for “a united Church, a sign of unity and communion, which becomes a leaven for a reconciled world.”

In the face of a world marked by so much discord and wounds caused by hatred, violence, prejudice, fear, and economic reality “that exploits the Earth’s resources and marginalises the poorest,” the Pope said, “we want to be a small leaven of unity, communion, and fraternity within the world.”

“We want to say to the world, with humility and joy: Look to Christ! Come closer to him! Welcome his word that enlightens and consoles! Listen to his offer of love and become his one family: in the one Christ, we are one,” he urged. “This is the path to follow together, among ourselves but also with our sister Christian churches, with those who follow other religious paths, with those who are searching for God, with all women and men of good will, in order to build a new world where peace reigns!”

The Pope upheld the missionary spirit, adding that such an approach will keep the Church from closing itself off in small groups or taking on a feeling of superiority to the world. “We are called to offer God’s love to everyone, in order to achieve that unity which does not cancel out differences but values the personal history of each person and the social and religious culture of every people,” he said.

“Brothers and sisters, this is the hour for love! The heart of the Gospel is the love of God that makes us brothers and sisters.”

In conclusion, Pope Leo XIV invited all Christians to be enlightened by the Holy Spirit, so that we might build a Church “founded on God’s love, a sign of unity, a missionary Church that opens its arms to the world, proclaims the word, allows itself to be made ‘restless’ by history, and becomes a leaven of harmony for humanity.”

“Together, as one people, as brothers and sisters, let us walk towards God and love one another.”

+ LEO XIV

