

Pope Leo XIV



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Pope Leo XIV (born **Robert Francis Prevost**, September 14, 1955) is the head of the Catholic Church and sovereign of Vatican City. He is the first pope to have been born in the United States, the first to hold either U.S. or Peruvian citizenships, the first from the Order of Saint Augustine, and the second (after his immediate predecessor Pope Francis) from the Americas.

Prevost was born in Chicago and raised in the nearby suburb of Dolton, Illinois. He became a friar in the Order of Saint Augustine in 1977 and was ordained as a priest in 1982. He earned a Doctor of Canon Law (JCD) degree in 1987 from the Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas in Rome. His service includes extensive missionary work in Peru in the 1980s and 1990s, during which he worked as a parish pastor, diocesan official, seminary teacher, and administrator. Elected prior general of the Order of Saint Augustine, he was based in Rome from 2001 to 2013, and travelled extensively as part of this work, including to the order's many provinces and missions around the world. He then returned to Peru as Bishop of Chiclayo from 2015 to 2023. In 2023, Pope Francis appointed him prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops in Rome, and president of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America. Upon his return to Rome in 2023, Prevost was made a cardinal by Pope Francis.

As Cardinal, Prevost emphasized synodality, missionary dialogue, and engagement with social and technological challenges. He has also addressed issues such as climate change, global migration, church governance, and human rights, and expressed alignment with the reforms of the Second Vatican Council and the direction set for the Church by Francis.

Prevost's election in the 2025 conclave was unexpected by observers; he was a dark horse candidate, with Vatican insiders believing the prospect of a pope from the United States to be unrealistic given its status as a superpower. In honour of Pope Leo XIII, who developed modern Catholic social teaching amid the tumult of the Second Industrial Revolution, Prevost chose the papal name Leo XIV—both to echo Leo XIII's concern for workers and fairness, and as a response to the challenges of a new industrial revolution and artificial intelligence.