

## **ARCHBISHOP BERNARD'S REFLECTION**

*I welcome the wonderful news of the election of Cardinal Robert Prevost as our new Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV. As he prepared to give us his first blessing as Pope in St Peter's Square he also gave us a message of joyful encouragement, calling us to be bridge-builders who are the light of Christ in the world. As the first Pope from the United States of America he also remembered the people of Chiclayo in Peru where he had served as bishop until 2023.*

*I have just spent the last few days at Buckfast Abbey with all the Bishops of England and Wales as we prayed for the Cardinals in Conclave and as we waited to hear whom the Holy Spirit would identify as the Successor of Peter. It will be a great joy to serve the Church's mission inspired by the guidance of Pope Leo. All the lay faithful, the Religious and clergy of our Archdiocese are praying for our new Holy Father that he may serve the Church for many years and be richly blessed in his apostolate.*

## **POPE LEO'S FIRST WORDS AS POPE**

Peace be with you!

Dearest brothers and sisters, this was the first greeting of the risen Christ, the good shepherd who gave His life for the flock of God. I, too, would like this greeting of peace to enter your hearts, to reach your families and all people, wherever they are; and all the peoples, and all the earth: Peace be with you.

This is the peace of the Risen Christ, a disarming and humble and preserving peace. It comes from God. God, who loves all of us, without any limits or conditions.

Let us keep in our ears the weak but always brave voice of Pope Francis, who blessed Rome - the Pope who blessed Rome and the world that day on the morning of Easter.

Allow me to continue that same blessing. God loves us, all of us, evil will not prevail.

We are all in the hands of God. Without fear, united, hand in hand with God and among ourselves, we will go forward.

We are disciples of Christ, Christ goes before us, and the world needs His light. Humanity needs Him like a bridge to reach God and His love. You help us to build bridges with dialogue and encounter so we can all be one people always in peace.

Thank you Pope Francis!

Thank you to my Cardinal brothers who chose me to be the Successor of Peter and to walk together with you as a united Church searching all together for peace and justice, working together as women and men, faithful to Jesus Christ without fear, proclaiming Christ, to be missionaries, faithful to the gospel.

I am a son of Saint Augustine, an Augustinian. He said, "With you I am a Christian, for you a bishop." So may we all walk together towards that homeland that God has prepared for us.

To the Church of Rome, a special greeting:

We have to look together how to be a missionary Church, building bridges, dialogue, always open to receiving with open arms for everyone, like this square, open to all, to all who need our charity, our presence, dialogue, love.

[In Spanish]:

Hello to all and especially to those of my diocese of Chiclayo in Peru, a loyal, faithful people accompanying the bishop and helping the bishop.

[Returning to Italian]:

To all you brothers and sisters of Rome, Italy, of all the world, we want to be a synodal church, walking and always seeking peace, charity, closeness, especially to those who are suffering.

Today is the day of the Supplicatio [Plea] to Our Lady of Pompei.

Our blessed mother Mary always wants to walk with us, be close to us, she always wants to help us with her intercession and her love. So let us pray together for this mission, and for all of the Church, and for peace in the world.

We ask for this special grace from Mary, our Mother.

Hail Mary... [accompanied by the crowds in St Peter's Square and around the world.]