

Pope Leo XIV's First Mass: 'Sing a New Song to the Lord'

Now that Pope Leo XIV has assumed the papacy, he lifted up praise to the Lord in his first homily to the world.

"I want to repeat the words from the responsorial psalm. I will sing a new song to the Lord because He has done marvels," Pope Leo says. "And indeed, not just with me, but with all of us, my brother cardinals, as we celebrate this morning, I invite you to recognize the marvels that the Lord has done, the blessings that the Lord continues to pour out upon all of us."

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Preaching from the Gospel of Matthew, he reflected on the confession of Peter—"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God"—as the bedrock of the church's identity and message.

Through the lens of Peter's profession, Pope Leo XIV emphasized both the gift and the responsibility of salvation. The faith handed down through apostolic succession, he said, reveals Christ as the only Savior—one who "revealed Himself to us in the trusting eyes of a child, in the lively mind of a young person and in the mature features of a man."

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Addressing the weight of his new role, Leo XIV acknowledged the calling upon him: "God has called me by your election to succeed the prince of the apostles and has entrusted this treasure to me so that with His help, I may be its faithful

administrator.”

He further offered a sobering analysis of today’s culture, comparing it to the setting of Caesarea Philippi—marked by beauty and power but also by betrayal and infidelity. He described a world where Jesus is either ignored as irrelevant or admired only when convenient. In many places, he warned, the Christian faith is “considered absurd, meant for the weak and unintelligent,” and many baptized believers live in a state of “practical atheism.”



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Rather than retreat, Pope Leo XIV urged the church to step boldly into this world, proclaiming Christ with joy and conviction. The task, he said, begins with personal commitment: “It is essential that we too repeat with Peter, you are the Christ, the Son of the living God... first of all in our personal relationship with the Lord and our commitment to a daily journey of conversion.”

Quoting St. Ignatius of Antioch, he concluded with a plea for humility in leadership: “To move aside so that Christ may remain... to spend oneself to the utmost so that all may have the opportunity to know and love him.”

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As Pope Leo XIV begins his pontificate, his message outlines a vision for the church centered on faithfulness to the Gospel and personal transformation. Rather than relying on tradition or structure alone, his address encourages a renewed focus on the lived expression of faith and the enduring relevance of Christ’s message for all people. Time will tell what kind of legacy Pope Leo XIV will leave behind.

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