



STATEMENT OF MOST REV. SCOTT E. BULLOCK, BISHOP OF RAPID CITY
ELECTION OF POPE LEO XIV
MAY 8, 2025

OFFICE OF BISHOP

Habemus papam!

In the name of the people of the Diocese of Rapid City, we give thanks to God that the Holy Spirit has selected a new leader of our Church, Pope Leo XIV, formerly Robert Cardinal Prevost, OSA, one of our own from the United States. This election was a very quick one, which gives confidence to the action of the Holy Spirit, that a consensus was reached so quickly. As the Vicar of Christ and the Successor of Peter, the Pope is the agent and center of unity which requires a powerful gift of the Holy Spirit as promised by our Lord Jesus. I invite all the members of our Church in western South Dakota to join the millions of their fellow Catholics around the world in offering a prayer of gratitude for our new pope. We believe our supreme prayer of thanksgiving is the Eucharist, the Mass. I invite you to join your brothers and sisters at Mass this weekend in offering this prayer of thanksgiving for Pope Leo XIV. I extend our gratitude to our sisters and brothers in Christ who worship in other Christian churches and communities for your prayers for our new Pope —may his ministry contribute to the unity that our Lord prayed for, that we might be one (*cf.* John 17:20-21). Finally, thanks to you and all people of faith for your prayers for our new pope. May his spiritual leadership contribute to a more humane and just world that God has given us.

We have been given a new pope who was formed as a priest in the Augustinian order, with a great deal of time as a missionary in Peru. Furthermore, he has expertise in Church law and served on Dicasteries (congregations of the Holy See) for Bishops and Evangelization. His first words to the world: “Peace be with you all—these were the first words of the Risen Lord.” May we indeed know that peace more fully in our families, communities, and among the nations, praying especially as Pope Leo XIV did, through the intercession of Mary, the Mother of Peace.

I will be celebrating a Mass of Thanksgiving for our new pope this evening at 5:30 pm at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Rapid City and I have directed our priests and people throughout the diocese to do the same as soon as it is possible. May we join the angels and saints in a resounding hymn of praise, praising our God for the gift of our new Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV.