

POPE LEO XIV

READING

On May 8, 2025, the Catholic Church announced its newly elected pope: Pope Leo XIV. He was born Robert Francis Prevost in Chicago, Illinois, in 1955. That makes him the first American pope in history, which is quite historic for both the United States and the Church. He was chosen during a special meeting called a conclave, where Catholic cardinals gather to vote for a new pope.

Before being elected, he had a long and diverse career. Although Leo XIV was born in the United States, he spent many years serving the Church in Peru. He learned Spanish and worked with local communities, where he spent over two decades serving as a missionary and later as bishop in the city of Chiclayo.

In 2023, Pope Francis appointed Prevost as the head of the Dicastery for Bishops, recognizing his leadership and dedication to the Church's mission. His election as Pope Leo XIV reflects a blend of tradition and globalism, aiming to bridge divides within the Church and address contemporary challenges with compassion and inclusivity. He has already expressed a desire to unite Catholics around the world and focus on compassion, inclusion, and humility.

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What Is a Conclave?

In the Catholic Church, a conclave is a special and secret meeting.

During the conclave, cardinals from around the world come together to choose a new pope. Only cardinals under the age of 80 can vote.

The conclave happens inside the Sistine Chapel, which is in Vatican City, in Rome. The doors are locked during the meeting. The cardinals pray, talk, and vote in secret. They may vote several times before they agree on one person.

When a pope is chosen, white smoke comes out of a small chimney.

This tells people that the Church has a new pope. If no one is chosen, black smoke appears instead.

To win, a candidate must get at least two-thirds of the votes. After the vote, the new pope accepts and chooses a new name.

In May 2025, the cardinals met for a conclave and chose Pope Leo XIV. He is the first American pope in history.

QUESTIONS

Are the sentences True or False? Circle the correct answer.

**A conclave is a public meeting.
(true/false)**

**Cardinals vote to choose a new pope.
(true/false)**

**White smoke means no pope was chosen.
(true/false)**

**The conclave happens in Vatican City.
(true/false)**

**Pope Leo XIV is from the United States.
(true/false)**

QUESTIONS

Match the words with their correct definitions:

- 1. Conclave**
- 2. Cardinals**
- 3. Vote**
- 4. Sistine Chapel**
- 5. Chimney**
- 6. Candidate**
- 7. Two-thirds**

A. The church in Vatican City where the conclave happens.

B. The action of choosing someone or something by making a decision.

C. A pipe or structure where smoke comes out, often seen on a roof.

D. People who are responsible for electing the pope.

E. A person who is chosen to run for a position (like the pope).

F. A secret meeting where cardinals gather to choose a new pope.

G. A fraction, meaning two parts out of three.

QUESTIONS

Fill in the blanks with the correct vocabulary word:

The cardinals gather in the _____ to vote for a new pope.

The _____ meet in secret to discuss and vote on a new pope.

A _____ must get at least _____ of the votes to win.

If no pope is chosen, _____ smoke appears to show the decision has not yet been made.

Only people under the age of 80 can _____ in the conclave.

When a pope is chosen, _____ smoke comes out of the chimney.

ANSWERS

TRUE OR FALSE:

A CONCLAVE IS A PUBLIC MEETING.

(TRUE/**FALSE**)

CARDINALS VOTE TO CHOOSE A NEW POPE.

(**TRUE**/FALSE)

WHITE SMOKE MEANS NO POPE WAS CHOSEN.

(TRUE/**FALSE**)

THE CONCLAVE HAPPENS IN VATICAN CITY.

(**TRUE**/FALSE)

POPE LEO XIV IS FROM THE UNITED STATES.

(**TRUE**/FALSE)

MATCH THE WORDS WITH THEIR CORRECT DEFINITIONS:

F – CONCLAVE

D – CARDINALS

B – VOTE

A – SISTINE CHAPEL

C – CHIMNEY

E – CANDIDATE

G – TWO-THIRDS

FILL IN THE BLANKS:

SISTINE CHAPEL

CARDINALS

CANDIDATE, TWO-THIRDS

BLACK

VOTE

WHITE

ANSWERS

FILL IN THE BLANKS:

SISTINE CHAPEL

CARDINALS

CANDIDATE, TWO-THIRDS

BLACK

VOTE

WHITE