



Pope Francis

Dec. 17, 1936 – April 21, 2025

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'Beacon of Unwavering Hope'



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LIGHT OF THE WORLD: Pope Francis holds the monstrance while delivering his extraordinary blessing “urbi et orbi” (to the city and the world) during a prayer service in the portico of St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican March 27, 2020. The service was livestreamed in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic.

By Cindy Wooden



VATICAN CITY
— Pope Francis,
who died April
21 at age 88,

gave new energy to millions of Catholics — and caused concern for some.

He transformed the image of the papacy into a pastoral ministry based on personal encounters and strong convictions about mission, poverty, immigration and dialogue.

Pope Francis was often practical and even poetic when speaking about family life, the environment and ministry in the Church, but those also were the areas where he frequently unleashed the perplexity and even ire of some Catholics, who were convinced he was trying to change Church teaching or practice.

While insisting he was not changing Church teaching, Pope Francis also insisted that Catholics and their parishes must welcome all people seeking God with a sincere heart.

His insistence at World Youth Day in Lisbon, Portugal, in 2023 that in the Church there is room for “*todos, todos, todos*” — “everyone, everyone, everyone” — became a frequent affirmation for the rest of his pontificate.

Cardinal Robert W. McElroy, archbishop of Washington, said in a state-

ment that the Church and the world have lost “a true shepherd of souls, a beacon of unwavering hope, and a voice of penetrating truth.”

“From the very first moments of his service to the universal Church,” the cardinal said, “Pope Francis enshrined the mercy of God at the heart of his proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In doing so, he illuminated with new depth the pastoral dimension of the Church’s mission, which is rooted first in embracing love rather than in judgment.”

God’s mercy was so central to his vision of what the Church’s ministry must embody that he led an extraordinary Holy Year of Mercy in 2015-16.

The iconic images of Pope Francis’ papacy were photographs of him embracing the sick, washing the feet of prisoners and eating with the poor.

Elected March 13, 2013, the Argentine cardinal was the first pope in history to come from the Southern Hemisphere and the first non-European elected in almost 1,300 years. The Jesuit was also the first member of his order to be elected pope and the first member of any religious order elected in nearly two centuries.

He spent much of the first nine years of his pontificate pursuing two ambitious projects: revitalizing the Church’s efforts at evangelization — constantly urging outreach rather than a preoccupation with internal

Church affairs — and reforming the central administration of the Vatican, emphasizing its role of assisting bishops around the world rather than dictating policy to them.

Pope Francis’ focus on the pastoral aspect of his ministry, and the ministry of all priests, led him to shed elements of protocol and even safety concerns that would have distanced him from crowds at his public appearances; he kissed thousands of babies, drank the popular Argentine *mate* herbal tea whenever anyone in the crowd offered it, and tenderly embraced people with disabling or disfiguring ailments.

Eight months after taking office, Pope Francis published his apostolic exhortation “*Evangelii Gaudium*” (“The Joy of the Gospel”), a detailed vision of the program for his papacy and his vision for the Church — particularly the Church’s outreach and its response to challenges posed by secular culture.

Faith, he constantly preached, had to be evident in the way one treated the poor and weakest members of society.

Not counting a brief visit to Castel Gandolfo to meet retired Pope Benedict XVI, Pope Francis’ first trip outside of Rome was to visit migrants — many brought across the Mediterranean by smugglers — in Lampedusa, a southern Italian island just 70 miles from Tunisia.

He made 47 foreign trips, visiting centers of global power as well as the “peripheries” of the world’s influence and power.

Making his first-ever trip to the United States, Pope Francis visited in September 2015 and became the first pope to address a joint meeting of Congress. Referring to himself as a “son of immigrants,” he pleaded for greater openness to accepting immigrants.

Bishops and Synods

The world Synod of Bishops was given greater prominence under Pope Francis, who called two gatherings of the Synod of Bishops to focus on the pastoral care of the family.

The first, an extraordinary synod, was in October 2014, and a larger gathering met at the Vatican a year later.

In March 2016, Pope Francis published his post-synodal apostolic exhortation “*Amoris Laetitia*” (“The Joy of Love”), which insisted that because each family that has experienced brokenness has a different story, those differences must be considered when determining if such couples eventually can access the sacraments.

The synod met again in October 2018 to focus on young people, the faith and vocational discernment. Just five months later, Pope Francis

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released “Christus Vivit” (“Christ Lives”), a combination letter to young people about their place in the Church and a plea to older members of the Church not to stifle the enthusiasm of the young.

His next synod was the special gathering in October 2019 focused on the Amazon and on ways to provide pastoral care to a widely scattered flock while protecting the region’s Indigenous people and safeguarding the environment.

The pope’s reflection on the synod, “Querida Amazonia” (“Beloved Amazonia”) was released less than four months later.

In October 2021, Pope Francis launched a two-year process of listening on the local, diocesan and national levels in preparation for a synod focused on working “For a synodal Church: communion, participation and mission.”

While maintaining the synod’s identity as a meeting primarily of bishops from around the world, the pope expanded the participation by naming several dozen laypeople — women and men — as voting members of the synod, which met in both October 2023 and October 2024.

Pope Francis insisted being holy is not boring or impossible, and that it grows through small, daily gestures and acts of loving kindness. Holiness was the topic of his third apostolic exhortation, “Gaudete et Exsultate” (“Rejoice and Be Glad”), published in March 2018.

Early Years

Jorge Mario Bergoglio was born Dec. 17, 1936, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. His father was an immigrant from northwestern Italy and his mother an Argentine of Italian origin.

As a teenager, he swept floors in a factory, ran tests in a chemical laboratory and worked as a bouncer in a bar. At 21, he suffered a severe infection, and half of his right lung was removed.

He earned a chemical technician’s diploma from his high school and entered the Jesuit novitiate in March 1958. He was ordained a priest Dec. 13, 1969.

After his perpetual profession as a Jesuit in 1973, he became master of novices at the Seminary of Villa Barilari in San Miguel. Later that same year, he was appointed superior of the Jesuit province of Argentina.

During Argentina’s 1976-1983 military dictatorship, the future pope ran a clandestine network that sheltered or shuttled to safety people whose lives were in danger.

Bishop, Cardinal and Pope

In 1992, Father Bergoglio was appointed one of the three auxiliary bishops of the Archdiocese of Buenos Aires. He was named coadjutor archbishop in 1997 and became archbishop of Buenos Aires in 1998. Pope John Paul II named him to the College of Cardinals three years later.

As leader of an archdiocese with more than 2.5 million Catholics,



FIRSTHAND LOOK: Pope Francis arrived in a golf cart to visit the destroyed Al-Tahera Syrian Catholic Church in Mosul, Iraq, March 7, 2021.

Cardinal Bergoglio strove to be close to the people. He rode the bus, visited the poor, lived in a simple apartment and cooked his own meals. Many continued to refer to him as “Father Jorge.”

His election as pope on March 13, 2013, came on the second day of the conclave. Among the early surprises was the new pope’s choice of name, which he later explained was intended to honor St. Francis of Assisi, “the man of poverty, the man of peace, the man who loves and protects creation.”

New Approach to Evangelization

“Go out” was Pope Francis’ constant plea to every Catholic.

He sought to correct what he saw as an overemphasis on certain moral teachings at the expense of the essential Gospel message.

“We cannot insist only on issues related to abortion, gay marriage and the use of contraceptive methods,” the pope told an interviewer. “The teaching of the Church, for that matter, is clear, and I am a son of the

Church, but it is not necessary to talk about these issues all the time.”

The interview was published about a month after he told reporters, “A gay person who is seeking God, who is of goodwill — well, who am I to judge him?”

Some critics saw the statements as dangerous signs of leniency, but even if he did so less frequently than his immediate predecessors, Pope Francis also taught about those moral issues.

Defending Poor and Persecuted

Pope Francis’ blunt language about the deadly impact of the “idolatry of money” and an economic model without moral constraints or obligatory sharing led to accusations that he was a Marxist or a socialist.

He responded that he was just trying to be a Christian.

In the modern world, the earth itself is one of the poor as it faces the threat of pollution and destruction, he wrote in his 2015 encyclical letter, “Laudato Si’, on Care for Our Common Home.”

Pope Francis said all people of

goodwill have an obligation to take steps to mitigate climate change, clean the land and the seas, and start treating all of creation — including the unborn and the poor — with respect and concern.

He drew from St. Francis of Assisi’s teaching on “fraternal openness” for his encyclical, “Fratelli Tutti, on Fraternity and Social Friendship,” signed at the tomb of the Assisi saint and released on the saint’s feast day, Oct. 4, 2020.

Pope Francis “taught us to live the values of the Gospel with fidelity, courage and universal love, especially in favor of the poorest and most marginalized,” U.S. Cardinal Kevin J. Farrell, chamberlain of the Holy Roman Church, said in his video announcement of the pope’s death. “With immense gratitude for his example as a true disciple of the Lord Jesus, we commend the soul of Pope Francis to the infinite merciful love of the Triune God.”

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GREAT HOST: Pope Francis spoke with members of the cultural group Tonatiuh from Monterrey, Mexico, at the end of his weekly general audience in the Paul VI Audience Hall at the Vatican Aug. 7, 2024.



Humble Pastor Lifted Local Lives

COURTESY FATHER BERNARDO LARA

RIGHT FIT: Father Bernardo Lara, of the Diocese of San Diego, met Pope Francis in the courtyard of the Vatican's Apostolic Palace on May 26, 2021, amid the COVID shutdowns. According to tradition, if a priest offers the pope a zucchetto, or skullcap, that is his size and brand, he keeps it and gives the priest his zucchetto. Father Bernardo guessed right.

By Denis Grasska



"Pope Francis inspired me to be a better follower of Christ.

He reminded me that God is ever merciful, and that we could always run back to the Father, as he never tires of forgiving us," said Carlos Salazar, 34, a member of St. John of the Cross Parish in Lemon Grove.

"He stood as a humble servant of the Church who led with great humility," said Bishop Michael Pham, diocesan administrator of San Diego.

The pontificate of Pope Francis deeply moved local Catholics and had a profound impact on the Diocese of San Diego.

"He asked us to listen and dialogue with each other to act for the common good," Bishop Pham said. "As our Church continues to journey home, we remember the groundwork that Pope Francis had laid before us."

It was Pope Francis, about two years into his pontificate, who appointed then Bishop Robert W. McElroy as the sixth bishop of San Diego in 2015 and, seven years later, elevated him to the College of Cardinals.

Under Cardinal McElroy's leadership, the San Diego Diocese became a place where the late pontiff's pastoral priorities, including immigration, environmental stewardship and synodality, were championed.

"I would say Pope Francis should be known as the pope of the migrants and refugees who called to build bridges and not walls," said Scalabrinian Father Patrick Murphy, director of Casa

del Migrante in Tijuana.

Inspired by "Laudato Si," Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical subtitled "On Care for Our Common Home," the San Diego Diocese launched in 2018 a Creation Care Ministry headed by a retired priest, Father Emmet Farrell, and a team of volunteers.

Since then, solar power systems have been installed at the diocese's Pastoral Center and more than half of its 96 parishes, and many have Creation Care teams.

In 2022, Christina Bagaglio Slentz was hired to oversee Creation Care Ministry at the diocesan level, becoming one of the first diocesan staffers nationwide to engage in such work full-time.

"Without Pope Francis, I would certainly not be who I am today," said Slentz. "This is not simply a function of the job I do, but rather about find-

ing my vocation."

"It is the greatest honor of my life to do this work," she said, "to find my small niche in contributing toward the fulfillment of God's plan for us."

When Pope Francis convened synods on the family in 2014 and 2015, on young people in 2018, and on the concept of synodality itself from 2021 to 2024, Cardinal McElroy responded to each of these global initiatives by holding diocesan-level synods in San Diego.

From the diocesan synod on the family emerged the diocesan Office for Family Life and Spirituality, which replaced the former Office for Marriage and Family Life and broadened its mission with a greater focus on the challenges faced by contemporary families.

"Our diocese is steeped in synodality thanks to Pope Francis and Car-

dinal McElroy," said Janelle Peregoy, who oversees a new ministry ushered in by that synod, serving separated and divorced faithful.

"Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation, 'The Joy of Love' ('Amoris Laetitia'), is essentially our office's guiding document on how to offer pastoral care to all families," she said. "It is not an exaggeration to say that I would not be doing the work I do throughout the diocese without the influence of Pope Francis."

Deacon Jim Vargas, president and CEO of Father Joe's Villages, released a statement sharing his "great sorrow" upon waking April 21 to the news of the pope's death.

"Pope Francis will forever be remembered for his humility and for

Servant *Continued on Page 5*



UNFORGETTABLE: The pope blessed newlyweds Kristopher and Brianah Wong Galvez, of the Imperial Valley, in December of 2024.

COURTESY BRIANAH WONG GALVEZ

Servant *Continued from Page 4*

his deep compassion, especially for our most vulnerable neighbors across the world," he said. "We celebrate his lifetime of service to the Lord and to all of humanity.

"Let us all live by his example," he said, "in serving our neighbors without judgment and always with the deepest love."

Auxiliary Bishop Ramón Bejarano said he was relieved that the pope had died at his home, rather than at the hospital, after delivering his Easter blessing to the throngs at St. Peter's Square.

"He even rode around in the pope-mobile to be close to the People of God," he said. "What a beautiful gift."

The bishop said that the pope inspired him with his humility and material poverty.

"He taught me and challenged me to live the radical love of Jesus, who never rejected or judged anyone, but loved everyone without preference or condition," the bishop said.

"He was a loud voice for peace and justice, but above all, for mercy," he concluded.

Teresa Pérez, an organizer with the San Diego Organizing Project, said that Pope Francis, "with his humility, taught me to be humble and, at the same time, to be brave as I work together with brothers and sisters in Christ to make changes so that everyone's dignity is respected and everyone feels a sense of belonging."

For Stephen Williams, 29, director of catechetical ministry at Sacred Heart Parish in Ocean Beach, the late pontiff "gave a voice in the Church to those who have been cast out of society."

"He made the 'invisible' of the Church not only seen, but loved. ... I will forever be in awe of his leadership of the Church," Williams said.

"Pope Francis was our father, who cared and loved all of God's people and creation," echoed Athena Besa, a member of the Diocesan Pastoral Council and president of the Diocesan Commission for Filipino Catholics.

She specifically expressed gratitude for the Synod on Synodality, describing it as "the blueprint he left us, so that we can continue his vision of listening and caring for all people, especially the marginalized, the poor, the hurt and unloved."

Jesuit Father Scott Santarosa, pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Barrio Logan, is a member of the same religious order as Pope Francis, who made history as the first Jesuit elected to the papacy.

"I think many people — of all religious expressions, and even non-religious — found in Pope Francis a credible example of humble, loving service; that he, as Vicar of Christ, was a person who himself lived like Christ," said Father Santarosa. "That was refreshing and compelling in an era when many leaders seem to be driven by ego or self-interest."

Some San Diego Catholics had the opportunity to exchange a handshake or conversation with Pope Francis,



PERSONAL TOUCH: Father Bradley Easterbrooks, associate pastor of St. Mark's Parish in San Marcos, met Pope Francis on Jan. 31, 2020, at the Apostolic Palace during a visit of the bishops of California with the Holy Father. The pope greeted bishops, priests and seminarians from California.

and they cherish those memories.

Salazar recalled how he and his wife, Monica, attended a general audience in November of 2016, just four days after their wedding, and received the "sposi novelli" blessing for newlyweds.

"The moment was surreal and forever will stay with us," he said.

Brianah Wong Galvez, 31, and her husband, Kristopher, also received the blessing in late December of 2024.

"In the moment we touched his hand and looked him in the eyes, the pope exuded the warm and welcoming love of Christ," said Wong Galvez, a member of St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Imperial. "You could feel his desire for everyone to know the heart of Christ through his encounters."

"We hold this blessing close to our hearts as a grace-filled start to our marriage," she said.

Father Bradley Easterbrooks, associate pastor of St. Mark's Parish in San Marcos and secretary of the diocesan Office for Ecumenical and Interreli-

gious Affairs, describes himself as having been "blessed" to meet the late pope several times and to assist at liturgies with him while living as a seminarian and priest in Rome.

"He always exuded joy and a sense of humor," Father Easterbrooks said.

"His pastoral emphasis on God the Father's mercy and compassion helped shape my approach to ministry," he added.

Father Bernardo Lara, pastor of the Catholic Communities of Brawley and Westmorland, also exchanged words with Pope Francis.

"I had the opportunity to talk to him about eight times, and every encounter was special," he said. "With those conversations and his books, homilies, speeches and actions, I saw him like a distant grandfather."

"A few times, (he) gave me advice on prayer, others on general-knowledge topics," Father Lara continued, "but he always made me laugh. He always found a way to crack

a joke in between the conversation."

Vi Salazar, a leader in the Vietnamese Eucharistic Youth Movement, said that the pope made a big impact in her life, noting "his love for the youth, not only through words, but his journey with all of us. He was approachable, sincere and willing to meet all of God's children."

Through synodality, she added, "Pope Francis has taught us how to listen with our hearts. For the first time ever, I felt that my voice was truly heard at the Universal Church and it brought peace to my heart."

Harrison Trubitt, 31, is a member of St. Gregory the Great Parish in Scripps Ranch and a campus minister at the Academy of Our Lady of Peace. He credits Pope Francis with inspiring him to get more involved at his parish and to get into ministry.

"I wanted to be a Christian like him — humble, joyful, strong, patient, kind; the way that I had come to learn that Jesus was," Trubitt said.

Auxiliary Bishop Felipe Pulido praised Pope Francis as "a true pastor — a man who deeply loved God and His Church."

"His pastoral approach to ministry personally inspired me," he said. "He was a shepherd who listened, journeyed with others, and challenged bishops, priests, the Catholic community, and the entire world with the words of the Gospel."

"While I feel a deep sadness at the passing of Pope Francis, I am also filled with hope for our Church," said Bishop Pulido. "People often ask me, 'Who do you think the next pope will be?' My honest answer is 'I don't know.' However, what I do know is this: The Holy Spirit continues to guide the Church, and I firmly believe that the Holy Spirit will provide us with a pope who is needed for the Church and the world at this moment in time."



ELEVATED: Pope Francis handed Cardinal Robert W. McElroy, of the Diocese of San Diego, a ring during a consistory in St. Peter's Basilica on Aug. 27, 2022.

Pope Advocated for a 'Listening' Church

By Cindy Wooden



VATICAN CITY
— While Pope Francis often bucked formality and sidestepped some offices of the Roman Curia, one institution he believed in deeply was the Synod of Bishops and — even more — the concept of “synodality.”

He told cardinals and superiors of Roman Curia offices in December 2021: “The synod wants to be an experience of feeling ourselves all members of a larger people, the holy and faithful people of God, and thus disciples who listen and, precisely by virtue of this listening, can also understand God’s will, which is always revealed in unpredictable ways.”

While the ways could be unpredictable, Pope Francis was certain that God’s will was about mission and that synodality was key to taking the prayers, experiences and intuitions of Catholics all over the world and using them to discern new, better ways to share the Gospel message.

Not everyone appreciated the pope’s insistence on listening to everyone and discussing controversial issues like Communion for the divorced and civilly remarried, or the place of LGBTQ Catholics in the Church or the possibility of ordaining women deacons.

However, the pope also noted that



NEW VOICES: Pope Francis greeted one of the participants of the Synod on Synodality on Oct. 15, 2024, in the Paul VI Audience Hall at the Vatican. For the first time, religious women and men and lay women and men had an equal vote with the bishops at the assembly.

the synod was not a parliament; listening to all Catholics is important for discernment, but any resulting decisions cannot violate revealed truths.

Cardinal Blase J. Cupich of Chicago felt that Pope Francis had been laying the foundation for a new synod process — the multi-year process leading to the assemblies on synodality in 2023 and 2024 — since the beginning of his pontificate.

The cardinal said the whole process of the synod on synodality seemed, “in some way, the opportunity for him to pull everything together.”

Pope Francis’ efforts culminated in the three-year process of the Synod

of Bishops on synodality, a process that included: listening to hundreds of thousands of Catholics in parishes across the globe; national and continental consultations; and two month-long assemblies at the Vatican where, for the first time, “non-bishops” — lay women and men and men and women belonging to religious orders — had an equal vote with the bishops.

At the end of the second assembly, in October 2024, members passed a final document, which Pope Francis adopted as his own and asked bishops to begin implementing.

The document called on parishes and dioceses to move quickly to give

life to the consultative bodies and broad participation in mission and ministry already foreseen in Church law. It also urged bishops to hire more women and laymen to teach in seminaries and all Catholics to reach out to people who “experience the pain of feeling excluded or judged because of their marital situation, identity or sexuality.”

In 2015, marking the 50th anniversary of the restoration of the synods for the Universal Church, Pope Francis called them “one of the most precious legacies of the Second Vatican Council.”

Catholic News Service

Pope Lived up to His Namesake’s Legacy

By Carol Glatz



VATICAN CITY
— Tapping into the spirit and spirituality of his namesake, St. Francis of Assisi, Pope Francis made care for creation and for all that lives on the earth a pastoral priority.

The importance of respecting and protecting the environment had been heralded by his predecessors, but Pope Francis took it to the next level and used his position to become a leading voice to reinvigorate existing efforts and rally all of humanity to see caring for creation as a moral imperative to hear and respond to the cry of the earth and those most affected by its degradation — the poor.

And he upped the ante on how serious an injury this is by saying abusing the “common home” of the earth, its ecosystems and all forms of life that depend on it, “is a grave sin.”

Pope Francis insisted the global crises unfolding in the world reflected an interconnectedness and interdependence between human beings and



BRIGHT DECISION: Solar panels are seen on the roof of the Paul VI Audience Hall. Pope Francis released his landmark environmental encyclical “Laudato Si’” 10 years ago May 12, 2015.

the earth.

An “integral ecology” goes “to the heart of what it is to be human,” he said. The flora and fauna, the heavens and seas and all people are not objects to be used and controlled, but God’s creations and gifts to be protected, loved and shared.

The core of his teaching on integral ecology, its principles and practical applications were laid out in his 2015

document, “Laudato Si’, on Care for Our Common Home,” the first papal encyclical on the environment.

The document’s influence on the international community was evident when world leaders met in Paris for the 2015 U.N. Climate Change Conference, where the pope was cited by more than 30 heads of state or government in their interventions. Several experts believed the encyclical

had a deep impact on the successful adoption of the Paris Agreement to fight climate change and mitigate its effects.

Pope Francis issued a follow-up document, “Laudate Deum” (“Praise God”) ahead of the U.N. Climate Change Conference in the United Arab Emirates in 2023. The exhortation presented an even stronger critique of global inaction and indifference to climate change.

In 2016, Pope Francis established the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, based on this understanding that safeguarding creation promotes peace and human rights and benefits economies, communities and present and future generations.

He solidly established ecology and safeguarding creation as a pro-life, pro-marginalized, pro-family issue. If people have no problem throwing away reusable resources or edible food when so many people are starving, he said, there is a similar “throwaway” attitude toward people believed to not be useful — including the unborn, the sick and the elderly.

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Simple Words Packed Powerful Message



Pope Francis used everyday language to preach the Gospel and inspire hearts to act.

Has Anyone Wept?

“Has any one of us grieved for the death of these brothers and sisters? Has any one of us wept for these persons who were on the boat — for the young mothers carrying their babies, for these men who were looking for a means of supporting their families?”

“We are a society which has forgotten how to weep, how to experience compassion — suffering with others: The globalization of indifference has taken from us the ability to weep!”

“In the Gospel, we have heard the crying, the great lamentation: ‘Rachel weeps for her children ... because they are no more.’ Herod sowed death to protect his own comfort. And so it continues ...”

“Let us ask the Lord to remove the part of Herod that lurks in our hearts; let us ask the Lord for the grace to weep over our indifference, to weep over the cruelty of our world, and for all those who in anonymity make social and economic decisions which open the door to tragic situations like this.”

Mass at the island of Lampedusa, where immigrants trying to reach Europe drowned often, July 8, 2013

What the Church Needs Most

“The thing the Church needs most today is the ability to heal wounds and to warm the hearts of the faithful; it needs nearness, proximity. I see the Church as a field hospital after battle.”

“It is useless to ask a seriously injured person if he has high cholesterol and about the level of his blood sugars! You have to heal his wounds. Then, we can talk about everything else ...”

“The Church sometimes has locked itself up in small-minded rules. The most important thing is the first proclamation: Jesus Christ has saved you ...”

“I dream of a Church that is a mother and shepherdess. The Church’s ministers must be merciful, take responsibility for the people and accompany them like the Good Samaritan, who washes, cleans and raises up his neighbor. This is pure Gospel. God is greater than sin.”

“The people of God want pastors, not clergy acting like bureaucrats or government officials ...”

“Instead of being just a Church that welcomes and receives by keeping the doors open, let us try also to be a Church that finds new roads, that is able to step outside itself and go to those who do not attend Mass. The ones who quit sometimes do it for reasons that, if properly understood, can lead to a return. But that takes audacity and courage.”

Interview published Sept. 30, 2013, America magazine



Family Is Light of the World

“Dear families, you know very well that the true joy which we experience in the family is not superficial; it does not come from material objects, from the fact that everything seems to be going well ... True joy comes from a profound harmony between persons, something which we all feel in our hearts and which makes us experience the beauty of togetherness, of mutual support along life’s journey.”

“But the basis of this feeling of deep joy is the presence of God, the presence of his love, which is welcoming, merciful and respectful towards all. And above all, a love which is patient: Patience is a virtue of God and he teaches us how to cultivate it in family life, how to be patient, and lovingly so, with each other. But if God’s love is lacking, the family loses its harmony, self-centredness prevails and joy fades.”

“But the family which experiences the joy of faith communicates it naturally. That family is the salt of the earth and the light of the world, it is the leaven of society as a whole. Dear families, always live in faith and simplicity, like the Holy Family of Nazareth!”

Mass for the Family Day, Oct. 27, 2013

Righteous and Sinners

“There is another temptation which we must especially guard against: the simplistic reductionism which sees only good or evil; or, if you will, the righteous and sinners. The contemporary world, with its open wounds which affect so many of our brothers and sisters, demands that we confront every form of polarization which would divide it into these two camps.”

“Our response must be one of hope and healing, of peace and justice. We are asked to summon the courage and the intelligence to resolve today’s many geopolitical and economic crises. We must move forward together, as one, in a renewed spirit of fraternity and solidarity, cooperating generously for the common good.”

Address to joint session of U.S. Congress, Sept. 23, 2015

‘Are We Ready for this Journey?’

“The Gospels frequently show us Jesus ‘on a journey’; he walks alongside people and listens to the questions and concerns lurking in their hearts. He shows us that God is not found in neat and orderly places, distant from reality, but walks ever at our side. He meets us where we are, on the often rocky roads of life.”

“Today, as we begin this synodal process, let us begin by asking ourselves — all of us; pope, bishops, priests,

religious and laity — whether we, the Christian community, embody this ‘style’ of God, who travels the paths of history and shares in the life of humanity. Are we prepared for the adventure of this journey? Or are we fearful of the unknown, preferring to take refuge in the usual excuses: ‘It’s useless’ or ‘We’ve always done it this way?’”

Mass, Oct. 10, 2021, launching Synod on Synodality

Young People and Elderly

“Friendship with an older person can help the young to see life not only in terms of the present and realize that not everything depends on them and their abilities. For the elderly, the presence of a young person in their lives can give them hope that their experience will not be lost and that their dreams can find fulfillment.”

Promoting World Day of Grandparents and Elderly, July 23, 2023

Jesus Knows Each of Us

“Dear young people, I would like to look into the eyes of each of you and say: ‘Do not be afraid.’ I will tell you something else, also very beautiful: It is no longer I, but Jesus himself who is now looking at you. He knows each of your hearts, each of your lives; he knows your joys, your sorrows, your successes and failures. He knows your heart. Today, he says to you, here in Lisbon, at this World Youth Day: ‘Have no fear, take heart, do not be afraid!’”

Mass for World Youth Day, Lisbon, Aug. 6, 2023

Everyone Can Be a Saint

“Do I ask God, in prayer, for the gift of a holy life? Do I let myself be guided by the good impulses that his Spirit inspires in me? And do I commit myself personally to practicing the Beatitudes of the Gospel?”

Interview, Nov. 1, 2024

Jesus Is Always With Us

“Jesus has risen from the dead and therefore is no longer in the tomb. We must look for him elsewhere. This is the message of Easter: We must look for him elsewhere. Christ is risen, he is alive! He is no longer a prisoner of death, he is no longer wrapped in the shroud, and therefore we cannot confine him to a fairy tale, we cannot make him a hero of the ancient world or think of him as a statue in a museum! On the contrary, we must look for him, and this is why we cannot remain stationary.”

“We must take action, set out to look for him: look for him in life, look for him in the faces of our brothers and sisters, look for him in everyday business, look for him everywhere except in the tomb. We must look for him without ceasing ... He is alive and is with us always, shedding the tears of those who suffer and adding to the beauty of life through the small acts of love carried out by each of us.”

Easter Mass homily, April 20, 2025, a day before he died

‘Un Faro de Esperanza’



DEFENSOR: El Papa Francisco oró en la frontera entre El Paso, Texas, y Ciudad Juárez, México, antes de celebrar una Misa el 17 de febrero de 2016. El Papa hizo la inmigración un tema central de su pontificado.

Por Cindy Wooden



CIUDAD DEL VATICANO — El Papa Francisco, quien falleció

el 21 de abril a los 88 años, inspiró a los católicos de todo el mundo con su humildad y su visión de que todos pertenecían a la Iglesia.

Transformó la imagen del papado en un ministerio pastoral basado en encuentros personales y firmes ideas sobre la pobreza, inmigración y el diálogo.

El Papa Francisco solía ser práctico e incluso poético al hablar de la vida familiar, el medio ambiente y el ministerio en la Iglesia, pero también en esos ámbitos desató preocupación e incluso la ira de algunos católicos, convencidos de que intentaba cambiar la doctrina de la Iglesia.

Aunque insistió en que no estaba cambiando la enseñanza de la Iglesia, el Papa Francisco también insistió en que los católicos y sus parroquias deben aceptar a todas las personas que buscan a Dios con sinceridad.

Su insistencia en la Jornada Mundial de la Juventud en Lisboa, Portugal, en 2023, en que en la Iglesia hay espacio para “todos, todos, todos” se convirtió en una afirmación frecuente durante

el resto de su pontificado.

El cardenal Robert W. McElroy, arzobispo de Washington, declaró que la Iglesia y el mundo han perdido “un verdadero pastor de almas, un faro de esperanza inquebrantable y una voz de verdad penetrante”.

“Desde los primeros momentos de su servicio a la Iglesia universal”, declaró el cardenal, “el Papa Francisco consagró la misericordia de Dios en el corazón de su proclamación del Evangelio de Jesucristo. Al hacerlo, iluminó con nueva profundidad la dimensión pastoral de la misión de la Iglesia, que se basa principalmente en acoger el amor, no en el juicio”.

La misericordia de Dios fue un tema constante en su predicación y tan central en su visión de lo que debe representar la Iglesia, que dirigió un Año Jubilar de la Misericordia en 2015-16.

Las imágenes icónicas del Papa Francisco fueron fotografías de él abrazando a los enfermos, lavando los pies a los presos y comiendo con los pobres.

Elegido el 13 de marzo de 2013, el cardenal argentino fue el primer papa de la historia proveniente de Latinoamérica y el primer no europeo elegido en casi 1,300 años. El jesuita fue el primer miembro de su orden en ser elegido papa y el primer miembro de una orden religiosa elegido en casi dos siglos.

Dedicó gran parte de los primeros

nueve años de su pontificado a dos ambiciosos proyectos: revitalizar los esfuerzos de evangelización de la Iglesia — inspirando constantemente la difusión en lugar de preocuparse por los asuntos internos de la Iglesia — y reformar la administración central del Vaticano, enfatizando su papel de asistencia a los obispos de todo el mundo en lugar de imponerles políticas.

Su empuje y popularidad fuera de la Iglesia parecieron disminuir en 2018 debido a nuevas revelaciones sobre la magnitud de los abusos sexuales clericales en la Iglesia y a los esfuerzos de los obispos por encubrir el escándalo, así como a casos en los que, inicialmente, el Papa Francisco parecía más inclinado a creer a los obispos que a las víctimas.

El enfoque del Papa Francisco en el aspecto pastoral de su ministerio lo llevó a abandonar elementos de protocolo e incluso preocupaciones de seguridad que lo habrían distanciado de las multitudes en sus presentaciones públicas; besó a miles de bebés, bebió el popular mate argentino siempre que alguien entre la multitud se lo ofrecía y abrazó con ternura a personas con discapacidades y deformidades.

Defensor de los Inmigrantes

La fe, predicaba constantemente, debía mostrarse en el trato a los pobres y a los miembros más débiles de la sociedad. Denunció la trata de

personas y convocó a fuerzas dentro y fuera de la Iglesia para cooperar en la lucha contra el tráfico de personas.

Sin contar una breve visita a Castel Gandolfo para reunirse con el papa emérito Benedicto XVI, el primer viaje del Papa Francisco fuera de Roma fue para visitar a migrantes — muchos traídos a través del Mediterráneo por traficantes — en Lampedusa, una isla del sur de Italia a solo 112 kilómetros de Túnez.

Realizó 47 viajes al extranjero, visitando centros de poder global, así como las “periferias” de la influencia y el poder del mundo.

En su primer viaje a Estados Unidos en septiembre de 2015, el Papa Francisco se convirtió en el primer papa en dirigirse a una reunión conjunta del Congreso. Definiéndose como “hijo de inmigrantes” — y señalando que muchos de los legisladores también lo eran — abogó por una mayor aceptación de los inmigrantes. A lo largo del viaje, planeado en torno al Encuentro Mundial de las Familias en Filadelfia, defendió el matrimonio y la familia, insistió que toda vida humana es sagrada e instó al pueblo estadounidense a trabajar unido para ayudarse mutuamente y ofrecer esperanza al mundo.

En 2016, durante el Año Jubilar de la Misericordia, celebró una misa en Ciudad Juárez, México, a lo largo de

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Pastor *Viene de página 8*

la frontera entre Estados Unidos y México, llamando la atención sobre los millones de personas que arriesgan sus vidas para cruzarla. En 2019, inauguró una escultura en la Plaza de San Pedro, que representa a un grupo de migrantes y refugiados de diversas culturas y períodos históricos, para recordar a los millones de visitantes que acuden al Vaticano cada año el desafío evangélico de la hospitalidad.

Cuando el Papa Francisco fue elegido en 2013, el número de migrantes internacionales en todo el mundo ascendía a 231 millones. Para 2024, esa cifra había ascendido a casi 281 millones. Mientras los conflictos, la inestabilidad económica y el cambio climático impulsaban el desplazamiento entre continentes, el Papa Francisco planteó persistentemente la migración como un problema moral fundamental con serias implicaciones políticas.

El Papa no dudó en alzar la voz sobre la migración en contextos específicos. En 2017, apeló personalmente al entonces presidente Donald Trump para que reconsiderara la decisión de su administración de rescindir el programa de Acción Diferida para los Llegados en la Infancia (DACA), afirmando que una “buena persona provida” no buscaría separar a los niños de sus padres, sino defender a la familia, que es “la cuna de la vida”.

De igual manera, en Italia, se pronunció constantemente contra las medidas migratorias de mano dura, denunciando los intentos de criminalizar a las organizaciones no gubernamentales que rescataban a migrantes en el Mediterráneo.

El pasado febrero, mientras la segunda administración de Trump intensificaba la retórica antiinmigrante y congelaba los programas de apoyo a la inmigración legal, el papa Francisco volvió a abordar el tema, esta vez en una carta a los obispos estadounidenses. Refiriéndose a las deportaciones masivas en curso, instó a los católicos y a las personas de buena voluntad a no caer en “narrativas que discriminan y causan sufrimiento innecesario a nuestros hermanos y hermanas migrantes y refugiados”.

Sínodos de Obispos

El concepto del Sínodo Mundial de los Obispos cobró mayor relevancia bajo el papa Francisco, quien realizó cuatro durante su papado. Un sínodo es una asamblea de obispos de todo el mundo que debate temas de importancia para la Iglesia y formula recomendaciones al Papa para cambios. Con base en ellas, el Papa luego instruye a los obispos de todo el mundo a tomar medidas para fortalecer la Iglesia.

Enfocó el primer sínodo en la pastoral familiar, en 2014.

“El Señor nos pide que cuidemos de la familia, que ha sido, desde el principio, parte integral de su plan de amor para la humanidad”, dijo a los participantes en la Misa inaugural de ese sínodo.



TOQUE TIERNO: El Papa Francisco saludó a una anciana mientras se reunió con la gente en un barrio pobre de Asunción, Paraguay, el 12 de julio de 2015. El cuidado pastoral de los pobres y los necesitados fue un tema de su pontificado.

El segundo se reunió en octubre de 2018 para centrarse en los jóvenes, la fe y el discernimiento vocacional.

El siguiente fue la reunión especial de octubre de 2019, centrada en la Amazonía y en las maneras de brindar atención pastoral a una comunidad tan dispersa, a la vez que se protege a los pueblos indígenas de la región y se salvaguarda el medio ambiente.

En octubre de 2021, el Papa Francisco inició su sínodo final, un proceso de tres años de escucha a nivel diocesano, regional, nacional e internacional en preparación para un sínodo universal.

Los resultados de ese sínodo se empiezan a ver en las diócesis alrededor del mundo, inclusive la Diócesis de San Diego.

De hecho, los cuatro sínodos tuvieron un profundo efecto en la región y su comunidad católica.

Primeros Años

Jorge Mario Bergoglio nació el 17 de diciembre de 1936 en Buenos Aires,

Argentina. Su padre era inmigrante del noroeste de Italia y su madre, argentina de origen italiano.

De adolescente, limpió pisos en una fábrica, realizó pruebas en un laboratorio químico y trabajó como portero en un bar. A los 21 años, sufrió una infección grave y le extirparon la mitad del pulmón derecho.

Obtuvo el diploma de técnico químico en su escuela secundaria e ingresó al noviciado jesuita en marzo de 1958. Fue ordenado sacerdote el 13 de diciembre de 1969.

Tras su profesión perpetua como jesuita en 1973, se convirtió en maestro de novicios en el Seminario de Villa Barilari en San Miguel. Ese mismo año, fue nombrado superior de la provincia jesuita de Argentina. Durante la dictadura militar argentina de 1976-1983, el futuro Papa dirigió una red clandestina que albergaba o trasladaba a un lugar seguro a personas cuyas vidas estaban en peligro.

En 1992, el padre Bergoglio fue nombrado uno de los tres obispos

auxiliares de la Arquidiócesis de Buenos Aires. Fue nombrado arzobispo coadjutor en 1997 y se convirtió en arzobispo de Buenos Aires en 1998. El Papa Juan Pablo II lo nombró miembro del Colegio Cardenalicio tres años después.

Como líder de una arquidiócesis con más de 2.5 millones de católicos, el cardenal Bergoglio se esforzó por estar cerca de la gente. Viajaba en autobús, visitaba a los pobres, vivía en un apartamento sencillo y cocinaba sus propias comidas. Muchos seguían llamándolo “Padre Jorge”.

Su elección como Papa el 13 de marzo de 2013 se produjo el segundo día del cónclave. Una de las primeras sorpresas fue la elección del nombre del nuevo Papa, que, según explicó posteriormente, pretendía honrar a San Francisco de Asís, “el hombre de la pobreza, el hombre de la paz, el hombre que ama y protege la creación”.

Catholic News Service



¡BIENVENIDO! El Papa Francisco saludó a la multitud antes de celebrar una Misa para los peregrinos de la Jornada Mundial de la Juventud en el Campo San Juan Pablo II en Ciudad de Panamá, Panamá, el 27 de enero de 2019.



Un Pastor Humilde Inspiró al Rebaño Local

CORTESÍA PADRE BERNARDO LARA

¡PERFECTO! El padre Bernardo Lara, de la Diócesis de San Diego, vio el Papa Francisco en el patio del Palacio Apostólico del Vaticano el 26 de mayo de 2021, durante la pandemia de la COVID-19. Dice la tradición que si le llevas el solideo al Papa de su talla y marca correcta, él se queda con el tuyo y te da el que trae puesto. El padre le atinó.

Por Denis Grasska



“El Papa Francisco me inspiró a ser un mejor seguidor de Cristo. Me

recordó que Dios es siempre misericordioso y que siempre podemos recurrir al Padre, pues él nunca se cansa de perdonarnos”, dijo Carlos Salazar, de 34 años, miembro de la Parroquia de San Juan de la Cruz en Lemon Grove.

“Se mantuvo como un humilde servidor de la Iglesia que lideró con gran humildad”, dijo el Obispo Michael Pham, administrador diocesano de San Diego.

El pontificado del Papa Francisco inspiró profundamente a los católicos locales y tuvo un gran impacto en la Diócesis de San Diego.

“Nos pidió que nos escucháramos y dialogáramos para actuar por el bien común”, agregó el obispo Pham. “Mientras nuestra Iglesia continúa su camino, recordamos las bases que el Papa Francisco sentó ante nosotros”.

Fue el Papa Francisco, aproximadamente dos años después de que comenzó su pontificado, quien nombró al entonces Obispo Robert W. McElroy como sexto obispo de San Diego en 2015 y, siete años después, lo elevó al Colegio Cardenalicio. Bajo el liderazgo del cardenal McElroy, la Diócesis de San Diego se convirtió en un espacio donde se promovieron las prioridades pastorales del difunto pontífice, como la inmigración, la protección del medio ambiente y la sinodalidad.

“Diría que el papa Francisco debería ser conocido como el papa de los migrantes y refugiados que llamó a construir puentes y no muros”, dijo el padre scalabriniano Patrick Murphy, director de la Casa del Migrante en Tijuana.

Inspirada por “Laudato Si”, la encíclica del Papa Francisco de 2015, titulada “Sobre el Cuidado de la Casa Común”, la Diócesis de San Diego lanzó en 2018 un Ministerio de Cuidado de la Creación, dirigido por un sacerdote jubilado, el padre Emmet Farrell, y un equipo de voluntarios.

Desde entonces, se han instalado sistemas de energía solar en el Centro Pastoral de la diócesis y en más de la mitad de sus 96 parroquias, y muchas cuentan con equipos de Cuidado de la Creación.

En 2022, Christina Bagaglio Slentz fue contratada para dirigir el Ministe-

rio de Cuidado de la Creación a nivel diocesano, convirtiéndose en una de las primeras funcionarias diocesanas a nivel nacional en dedicarse a dicha labor a tiempo completo.

“Sin el Papa Francisco, sin duda no sería quien soy hoy”, dijo Slentz. “Esto no se trata simplemente de mi trabajo, sino de encontrar mi vocación”.

“Es el mayor honor de mi vida realizar este trabajo”, dijo, “encontrar mi pequeño nicho y contribuir al cumplimiento del plan de Dios para nosotros”.

Cuando el Papa Francisco convocó los sínodos sobre la familia (2016) y sobre los jóvenes (2018) y sobre el concepto mismo de sinodalidad (de 2021 a 2024), el Cardenal McElroy respondió a cada una de estas iniciativas globales celebrando sínodos a nivel diocesano en San Diego.

Del sínodo diocesano sobre la famil-

ia surgió la Oficina Diocesana para la Vida Familiar y la Espiritualidad, que reemplazó a la antigua Oficina para el Matrimonio y la Vida Familiar y amplió su misión, centrándose más en los desafíos que enfrentan las familias contemporáneas.

“Nuestra diócesis está inmersa en la sinodalidad gracias al Papa Francisco y al Cardenal McElroy”, declaró Janelle Peregoy, quien supervisa un nuevo ministerio iniciado por dicho sínodo, que atiende a los fieles separados y divorciados.

“La exhortación apostólica del Papa Francisco, ‘La Alegría del Amor’ (‘Amoris Laetitia’), es esencialmente el guía de nuestra oficina sobre cómo ofrecer atención pastoral a todas las familias”, dijo. “No exagero al decir que no es-

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INOLVIDABLE: El Papa bendijo a los recién casados Kristopher y Brianah Wong Galvez, del Valle Imperial, en diciembre de 2024.

CORTESÍA BRIANAH WONG GALVEZ

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taría realizando el trabajo que realizo en la diócesis sin la influencia del Papa Francisco”.

El diácono Jim Vargas, director ejecutivo de Father Joe's Villages, expresó su profundo pesar al despertar el 21 de abril con la noticia del fallecimiento del papa.

“El papa Francisco será recordado por siempre por su humildad y profunda compasión, especialmente por nuestros vecinos más vulnerables en todo el mundo”, declaró en un comunicado. “Celebramos su vida de servicio al Señor y a toda la humanidad.

“Vivamos todos según su ejemplo”, dijo, “sirviendo a nuestro prójimo sin juzgar y siempre con el más profundo amor”.

Teresa Pérez, organizadora del San Diego Organizing Project, afirmó que el Papa Francisco, “con su humildad, me enseñó a ser humilde y, al mismo tiempo, a ser valiente al trabajar junto con hermanos y hermanas en Cristo para lograr cambios que respeten la dignidad de todos y todos sientan un sentido de pertenencia”.

Para Stephen Williams, de 29 años, director del ministerio catequético de la Parroquia del Sagrado Corazón en Ocean Beach, el difunto pontífice “dio voz en la Iglesia a quienes han sido marginados de la sociedad”.

“Hizo que los ‘invisibles’ de la Iglesia no solo fueran vistos, sino amados... Siempre estaré asombrado por su liderazgo en la Iglesia”, dijo Williams.

“El Papa Francisco fue nuestro padre, quien cuidó y amó a todo el pueblo de Dios y la creación”, coincidió Athena Besa, miembro del Consejo Pastoral Diocesano y presidenta de la Comisión Diocesana para los Católicos Filipinos.

Expresó específicamente su gratitud por el Sínodo sobre la Sinodalidad, describiéndolo como “el modelo que nos dejó, para que podamos continuar su visión de escuchar y cuidar a todas las personas, especialmente a los marginados, los pobres, los heridos y los que no son amados”.

El padre jesuita Scott Santarosa, párroco de la Iglesia Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe en Barrio Logan, es miembro de la misma orden religiosa que el Papa Francisco, quien hizo historia como el primer jesuita elegido para el papado.

“Creo que muchas personas — de todas las religiones, e incluso no religión — encontraron en el Papa Francisco un ejemplo real de servicio humilde y amoroso; que él, como Vicario de Cristo, era una persona que vivió como Cristo”, dijo el padre Santarosa. “Eso fue refrescante en una época en la que muchos líderes parecen estar impulsados por el ego o el interés propio”.

Algunos católicos locales tuvieron la oportunidad de intercambiar un saludo o conversar con el Papa Francisco, y guardan esos recuerdos con cariño. Otros sintieron una conexión con él a distancia.

Salazar recordó cómo él y su esposa, Mónica, asistieron a una audiencia



TOQUE PERSONAL: El padre Bradley Easterbrooks, vicario parroquial de la Parroquia San Marcos, se reunió con el Papa Francisco el 31 de enero de 2020 en el Palacio Apostólico durante la visita de los obispos de California con el Santo Padre. Los acompañó el entonces obispo Robert W. McElroy.

general en noviembre de 2016, tan solo cuatro días después de su boda, y recibieron la bendición de los recién casados.

“El momento fue surrealista y quedará grabado para siempre en nuestra memoria”, dijo.

Brianah Wong Galvez, de 31 años, y su esposo, Kristopher, también recibieron la bendición a finales de diciembre de 2024.

“En el momento en que le tocamos la mano y lo miramos a los ojos, sentimos el cálido y acogedor amor de Cristo”, dijo Wong Galvez, miembro de la parroquia San Antonio de Padua en Imperial. “Se podía sentir su deseo de que todos conocieran el corazón de Cristo a través de sus encuentros”.

“Guardamos esta bendición muy cerca de nuestros corazones como un comienzo lleno de gracia para nuestro matrimonio”, dijo.

El padre Bernardo Lara, párroco de las comunidades católicas de Brawley y Westmorland, también intercambió palabras con el papa Francisco.



ELEVADO: El Papa Francisco le entregó un anillo al cardenal Robert W. McElroy, de la Diócesis de San Diego, durante un consistorio en la Basílica de San Pedro el 27 de agosto de 2022.

“Tuve la oportunidad de hablar con él unas ocho veces, y cada encuentro fue especial”, dijo. “Con esas conversaciones, sus libros, homilias, discursos y acciones, lo vi como un abuelo lejano”.

“Algunas veces me dio consejos sobre la oración, otras sobre temas generales”, continuó el padre Lara, “pero siempre me hacía reír. Siempre encontraba la manera de hacer un chiste entre la conversación”.

Ver al papa saludarla a ella y a un grupo de amigos mientras conducía por una calle de Cracovia, Polonia, durante la Jornada Mundial de la Juventud a finales de julio de 2016, fue lo más cerca que Natalie Ibarra estuvo de él físicamente.

Pero la parroquial de San Patricio de Carlsbad, de 32 años, dijo que el Papa Francisco ha sido “una inspiración constante” en su vida. Ella valoró su exhortación apostólica de 2019 “Christus Vivit”, que mostró “una pasión renovada” por llegar a los jóvenes adultos.

“Su énfasis pastoral en la misericordia y compasión de Dios Padre ayudó a moldear el enfoque de mi ministerio”, añadió. “Tengo la suerte de haber podido experimentar mi juventud y mis primeros años ministeriales a través de su papado”.

Destacando que el Papa era de Argentina, el obispo auxiliar Ramón Bejarano dijo que “su fe y experiencia de vida resonaron con muchos de nosotros de origen latinoamericano”.

El obispo dijo que el Papa lo inspiró con su humildad y pobreza material.

“Me enseñó y me desafió a vivir el amor radical de Jesús, quien nunca rechazó ni juzgó a nadie, sino que amó a todos sin preferencias ni condiciones”.

El obispo dijo sentir alivio de que el Papa no falleció en el hospital, sino en su hogar, al día siguiente de impartir la bendición de Pascua a miles de personas en la Plaza de San Pedro.

“Incluso viajó en el papamóvil para estar con el pueblo de Dios”, dijo. “¡Qué regalo!”

Por su parte, el obispo auxiliar Felipe Pulido elogió al papa Francisco como “un verdadero pastor, un hombre que amó profundamente a Dios y a su Iglesia”.

“Su enfoque pastoral me inspiró personalmente”, dijo. “Fue un pastor que escuchaba, acompañaba a otros y desafiaba a obispos, sacerdotes, a la comunidad católica y al mundo entero con las palabras del Evangelio”.

“Si bien siento una profunda tristeza por el fallecimiento del Papa Francisco, también me llena de esperanza para nuestra Iglesia”, dijo el obispo Pulido. “A menudo me preguntan: ‘¿Quién cree que será el próximo papa?’. Mi respuesta sincera es ‘No lo sé’. Sin embargo, lo que sí sé es esto: el Espíritu Santo continúa guiando a la Iglesia, y creo firmemente que nos dará un Papa que la Iglesia y el mundo necesitan en este momento”.

Shepherd Accompanied His Global Flock

VATICAN CITY — Here is a timeline of some significant events in Pope Francis' 12-year pontificate:

2013



March 13: Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Buenos Aires, Argentina, was elected pope on the second day of the conclave, becoming the first pope from the Southern Hemisphere and the first non-European elected in almost 1,300 years. The Jesuit was also the first member of his order to be elected pope.

2014

June 8: Pope Francis, Israeli President Shimon Peres, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople and others came together in the Vatican Gardens for an unprecedented gathering to pray for peace in the Holy Land.



2015

Sept. 19-27: Pope Francis traveled to Cuba then to Washington, D.C., New York and Philadelphia during his first visit to the United States. He addressed Congress, the United Nations and the World Meeting of Families, canonized St. Junipero Serra and visited the 9/11 memorial in New York.

Dec. 8: Pope Francis opened the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica to inaugurate a Holy Year of Mercy.

2016

Feb. 12-17: Pope Francis, on his way to Mexico, stopped in Cuba to meet Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill of Moscow at the Havana airport and sign a joint declaration in the presence of Cuban President Raul Castro. In Mexico, he celebrated Mass in Ciudad Juárez, which borders El Paso, Texas. Hundreds of thousands of people attended the Mass, which included faithful on both sides of the border.

2017



April 13: Pope Francis went to a maximum-security prison to celebrate the Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper and wash the feet of 12 prisoners, including three women and a Muslim man, who was preparing for baptism. The celebration continued a practice he began as archbishop of Buenos Aires and performed every Holy Thursday as pope:

including Catholics and non-Catholics and men and women, especially those who are marginalized, in the foot-washing rite.

2018

April 21: Pope Francis appointed three women as consultants to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the first time women and laypeople were named as active contributors — not support staff.

Aug. 2: Pope Francis ordered the revision of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* to describe the death penalty as morally inadmissible and to affirm that the Church "works with determination for its abolition worldwide."



2019

Feb. 4: Pope Francis and Sheikh Ahmad el-Tayeb, grand imam of Egypt's Al-Azhar mosque and university, signed the document on "Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together" during an interreligious meeting in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

Feb. 21-24: Pope Francis convened a global summit on child protection and abuse, bringing together nearly 200 Church leaders — presidents of bishops' conferences, the heads of the Eastern Catholic Churches, superiors of men's and women's religious orders, survivors and Roman Curia officials.

2020

March 27: During the coronavirus pandemic, Pope Francis prayed and delivered his extraordinary blessing "urbi et orbi" (to the city and the world) during an evening prayer service from St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican. St. Peter's Square was empty, and the service was livestreamed.



2021

March 5-8: Pope visited Iraq although sporadic violence continued in the country and COVID-19 restrictions were still in place. He honored Iraqi Christians who remained faithful during the Islamic State terror and worked to rebuild the country.

July 4: The pope underwent a three-hour scheduled surgery at a Rome hospital to remove part of his colon.

2022



July 13: Pope Francis named three women to the Dicastery for Bishops, which was the first time women were appointed to the dicastery that helped him choose bishops. He had appointed a woman to top management as a secretary of a dicastery for the first time in 2021.

July 24-29: Pope Francis made "a penitential trip" to Canada to meet with, listen to and apologize to members of Canada's First Nation, Métis and Inuit communities, especially those who experienced abuse or attempts at forced assimilation at Church-run residential schools.

2023

Jan. 5: Pope Francis presided over the funeral Mass for Pope Benedict XVI in St. Peter's Square. It was the first time in more than 200 years that a pope celebrated the funeral of his predecessor.

March 13: Pope Francis celebrated his 10th anniversary as pope.



June 7-16: Pope Francis was hospitalized for a three-hour operation to remove scar tissue and to repair a hernia located where a previous surgical incision had been made in his abdominal wall.

Oct. 4-29: Pope Francis presided over the first session of the Synod of Bishops on Synodality at the Vatican. The three-year process of listening and dialogue began in 2021 on the diocesan, regional and continental levels.

2024

March 24-31: For the second year in a row, Pope Francis followed the nighttime Way of the Cross service in Rome's Colosseum from his Vatican residence on Good Friday. But despite his limited mobility, he still presided over a full slate of Easter and Holy Week liturgies and rites, including his first Holy Thursday visit to a prison with only women present.

May 25-26: Pope Francis celebrated the first World Children's Day in Rome.

Oct. 2-27: Pope Francis presided over the second assembly of the Synod of Bishops on synodality.

Dec. 24: Pope Francis opened the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica, launching the "Jubilee of Hope," which was to run through Jan. 6, 2026.

2025

Feb. 14: Pope Francis was hospitalized at Rome's Gemelli hospital with bronchitis and breathing difficulties. He later was diagnosed with double pneumonia and multiple infections in his respiratory system. He was released March 23 and told he would need two months to convalesce.

April 20: Pope Francis met briefly with U.S. Vice President JD Vance in the papal residence and then went to the central balcony of St. Peter's Basilica to give his Easter blessing "urbi et orbi" (to the city and the world).



April 21: Pope Francis died at 7:35 a.m.