



Missionary Society of St Columban

聖高隆龐傳教會 General Council

A Missionary Church with Open Arms

Statement of the Columban Missionaries on the Election of Pope Leo XIV

With gratitude to God, we, the Columban Missionaries, rejoice in the election of Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost as the 267th Pope, greet him with fraternal affection, and pray for him as he begins his ministry as Bishop of Rome and Universal Pastor.

We welcome his election as a sign of the Holy Spirit's guidance for the Church and the world at this crucial time. His pastoral journey, rooted in his vocation as an Augustinian, shaped by service in the Peruvian Church, and enriched by leadership roles in his congregation and the universal Church, has been marked by humility, compassion, and courage. We deeply admire how he has accompanied communities through profound challenges such as poverty, violence, corruption, and social injustice, always walking alongside the people with a heart attuned to their suffering and hopes.

As missionaries who live and serve in places of hardship and resilience, we recognize in his leadership a call to renewal and solidarity. The Church today is called to be a people on the move – listening before speaking, walking with the excluded, and learning from the wisdom of the poor. We rejoice in his reaffirmation of synodality and his desire for a Church “always open to receiving with open arms for everyone,” a Church marked by dialogue, charity, and closeness, especially to those who are suffering.

His choice of the name *Leo XIV* is truly inspiring. Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum* prophetically addressed the social challenges of his time, laying the foundation for Catholic social teaching. We are encouraged by his vision for a missionary Church that reaches out to all, especially to those who are most in need, and we trust that his leadership will continue to strengthen the Church's commitment to peace and justice for all.

As Columban missionaries, our charism has brought us into interreligious dialogue, into the heart of ecological struggles, and into solidarity with people on the margins of society. We are committed to building a world shaped by Gospel values: a world where justice, peace, interreligious dialogue and care for creation are integral to the flourishing of all peoples.

We assure Pope Leo XIV of our prayerful support. We pray that the Church he now leads continues to be a beacon of mercy, hospitality, and hope, bringing light to a world in need, and inspiring all people to care for one another and for God's creation.

May Christ, who walks among the poor, guide him with wisdom and courage.

Hong Kong
9 May 2025

Rev. Andrei O. Paz, SSC
Superior General