

PONTIFICAL INAUGURATION - POPE LEO XIV



Robert Prevost OSA - Augustinian

It is now 10 days since the election of our new Pope Leo XIV and the initial surprise and general delight is still with us. For us as an Augustinian parish the announcement of a first ever Augustinian as Pope remains a cause of great pride. The fact that in years past the then Fr Robert Prevost OSA, Prior General of the Augustinians worldwide from 2001 to 2013, had visited the parish in person on one occasion in 2005 and possibly briefly another time, also made the news particularly significant and personal for us.

Although we have become accustomed to speaking of Saint Augustine, the Augustinians and Augustinian spirituality, to find the whole world suddenly eager for knowledge of our spiritual affiliation and legacy was and is equally a cause of great satisfaction.

Much has already been written and broadcast about the man, his background, his work as a missionary, a leader of his Order and then his time as a bishop in remote Peru, culminating in his appointment to the Dicastery of Bishops in Rome and his elevation by Pope Francis to the College of Cardinals. The general warmth of his reception as Pope as a man, a bridgebuilder, a reconciler, a listener and a pastor of vast experience, is also reassuring and bodes well for the challenges he will surely face.



This choice of name, Leo, the fourteenth pontiff to choose that name, has also been a subject of much speculation and conjecture. His own explanation refers to Pope Leo XII as a man engaging with modern issues, concerned for the worker and the disadvantaged in the face of the industrial revolution, and his pioneering social teaching. For those familiar with Augustinian history, the knowledge of Leo XIII as the revivor of the Augustinian Order at the turn of the 20th Century by his direct intervention, generosity as a benefactor and support, provides another insight into his decision.

His Coat of Arms forcefully asserts his association with his Augustinian roots displaying the familiar symbols of the book of Scripture and the pierced heart ablaze with love of God.

The parish is currently planning an appropriate occasion and way of commemorating this unanticipated and joyful event and will shortly announce the details.