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May 8th, 2025

PRESS RELEASE: Walking Together with the Caribbean: Pope Leo XIV and Our Church in the Peripheries

The election of Pope Leo XIV signals not just continuity but also a new tone of quiet strength and missionary fidelity—one that speaks directly to the heart of the Caribbean Church. His deep roots in the Global South, formed by decades of missionary service in Peru, ensure that he understands the realities of poverty, cultural hybridity, and resilient faith that shape our region.

Leo XIV is not a pope of spectacle but rather one of pastoral patience and principled discernment. His agenda—rooted in Augustinian spirituality, episcopal integrity, and a deep listening Church—calls us to become more authentically who we are: a Church of the people, close to the soil, steeped in song, and born from struggle.

His experience forming local clergy and leaders in the Peruvian Andes resonates with our own call to raise up a new generation of Caribbean leaders—bishops, priests, religious, and laypeople who are formed in our context, speak our languages, and understand the cries and hopes of our people. We must not wait for answers from Rome. Pope Leo XIV invites us to build local structures of synodality and holiness—to become a Church that walks forward, not one that waits passively.

Leo XIV's keen eye for bishop appointments as Prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops signals a focus on pastoral credibility. His vision is clear: the Church must be led by servants who live with the people, not by princes who live above them. For the Caribbean, this is a summons to deepen our pastoral accompaniment—especially with young people, migrants, and those hurt or alienated by the Church.

Our region is characterised by diverse culture, language, and liturgical expression. Leo XIV's Augustinian spirituality—centred on communion and interior conversion—can guide us away from the traps of ideological division and instead foster unity grounded in truth, humility, and grace. The temptation to polarise over issues like the Latin Mass or cultural morality is real.

However, Leo XIV directs us instead to the centre of Christ, where love and truth meet.

Pope Leo XIV inherits the synodal vision of Pope Francis, yet he introduces a missionary realism and discernment-focused leadership. His voice may be quieter, but it is no less prophetic. For us, this means continuing to invest in pastoral councils, diocesan synods, and regional collaboration—not as occasional events but as our enduring way of being Church. In a region often buffeted by storms—literal and metaphorical—Leo XIV’s leadership provides a calm, steadying presence. He does not promise immediate answers, but offers us space to breathe, discern, and act.

His voice reminds us: “The Church grows by witness, by love, and by walking together—step by step.” In this new papal era, the Caribbean Church is called to rise confidently, formed in our faith, rooted in our soil, and open to the Spirit’s movement. Under Pope Leo XIV, we are invited to walk forward with humble boldness, trusting that God is already at work among us, shaping a future of deeper communion and hope.

In Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Gordon', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Most Reverend Charles Jason Gordon
President
Antilles Episcopal Conference