Opinion
Guest Voices



Pope Francis greets U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., during a private audience Oct. 9, 2021, at the Vatican. (CNS/Vatican Media)



by Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi

View Author Profile

Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

March 15, 2023

Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint

Ten years ago, the world's Catholics welcomed a new pope: His Holiness Pope Francis. Pope Francis has truly been a pope for the people. A decade after his election, his papacy remains a beacon of peace, light, love and hope — for the global Catholic community and for all.



As we mark a decade of his leadership, we reflect on the many blessings and leadership that Pope Francis has bestowed upon the world. His Holiness has been the personification of our sacred responsibility in the Gospel of Matthew to honor the spark of divinity in the least of our brethren.

Pope Francis has challenged us to be good stewards of God's creation and to be a champion of the poor, the worker, the refugee and the immigrant. Pope Francis' commitment to uplifting the least of these shone through during his historic speech to Congress in 2015. Standing at the heart of our democracy, and speaking with beauty and moral force, he reminded us of our inescapable duty to those struggling to escape poverty and persecution — in our nation and in the world.

In that speech, he addressed a consequential legacy of the Francis stewardship, with his relentless and outspoken voice to save the planet. In his groundbreaking

encyclical, *Laudato Si*', Pope Francis described the climate as a common good: belonging to all and meant for all. Writing with crystal clarity and urgency, he called on all of us — governments, industries and individuals — to honor our shared responsibility to care for our common home. At the same time, Pope Francis often reminds us that we must recognize the disproportionate impact of the climate crisis on vulnerable communities — and with our solutions, pay special attention to their needs.

Advertisement

While I was thrilled to hear His Holiness' speech to Congress, it was overwhelming both personally and officially to attend his installation as pope on the feast of St. Joseph.

Personally, because my parents raised my brothers and me to be devoutly and proudly Catholic. My husband, Paul, our children, grandchildren and I have more than 150 years of Catholic school education among us.

Officially, because it is my privilege to represent San Francisco, a city that shares its namesake with Pope Francis. The song of St. Francis is the anthem of our city: "Lord, make me a channel of thy peace." In his words and works, vision and values, Pope Francis has truly been a channel of God's peace for the global Catholic community and for all.

On the anniversary of his papacy, let us renew our pledge to follow his lead and continue to serve as instruments of God's peace.

This story appears in the **10 years with Pope Francis** feature series. View the full series.
A version of this story appeared in the **March 31-April 13, 2023** print issue under the headline: Nancy Pelosi: Pope Francis is a pope for the people.