Vatican

Vatican News



A May 12, 2025, post on X by Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Ukraine's president, says he spoke with Pope Leo XIV about recently developments and invited the pope to Ukraine. (CNS/X)

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Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy thanked Pope Leo XIV for his support of a just and lasting peace in Ukraine, and he invited the newly-elected pontiff to visit the war-torn nation.

"I spoke with Pope Leo XIV. It was our first conversation, but already a very warm and truly substantive one," the president said on his X account May 12. The Vatican press office confirmed the call took place but would not specify who initiated the phone call.

"I invited His Holiness to make an apostolic visit to Ukraine. Such a visit would bring real hope to all believers and to all our people," he said on X.

The president said he "thanked His Holiness for his support of Ukraine and all our people. We deeply value his words about the need to achieve a just and lasting peace for our country and the release of prisoners. We also discussed the thousands of Ukrainian children deported by Russia. Ukraine counts on the Vatican’s assistance in bringing them home to their families."

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At his first "Regina Coeli" address from the central balcony of St Peter's Basilica May 11, Leo prayed for the people of Ukraine, saying, "May everything possible be done to achieve as soon as possible an authentic, just and lasting peace. May all prisoners be freed, and may the children return to their families." Ukraine says thousands of children have been forcibly taken to Russia during the war.

Zelenskyy said on X that he also told the pope about the agreement between Ukraine and Western nations calling for "a full and unconditional ceasefire for at least 30 days" beginning May 12.

He told Leo that Ukraine remains ready for "further negotiations in any format, including direct talks — a position we have repeatedly emphasized. Ukraine wants to end this war and is doing everything to achieve that. We now await similar steps from Russia."

Zelenskyy said the two leaders "agreed to stay in contact and plan (an) in-person meeting in the near future."