News



Pope Leo XIV wears a Chicago White Sox baseball cap during his weekly general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican June 11, 2025. (OSV News/Remo Casilli, Reuters)

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The Archdiocese of Chicago has scheduled a Mass and a special program June 14 to celebrate the election and inauguration of Pope Leo XIV, a native son of the Windy City.

The archdiocese said in an announcement the events including the Mass, preceded by music, a film, speakers and prayer will all take place at Rate Field, the ballpark of the Chicago White Sox. The stadium has capacity for some 40,000 participants.

In its announcement the archdiocese said, "Pope Leo XIV's message of peace, unity and the key to a meaningful life have touched hearts across the globe.
This celebration is an extraordinary opportunity for people from the city and beyond to come together in shared pride for one of our own."

The archdiocese posted a short YouTube video of Chicago Cardinal Blase J. Cupich inviting the public to the celebration, recorded during a short visit home after the conclave in Rome and before returning there for the pontiff's May 18 inauguration Mass.

Pope Leo XIV, who was born in Chicago and grew up in Dolton, Illinois, a south suburb just outside the city limits, has followed the Southside team since childhood, according to his brother Louis Prevost.

"He was big into baseball," Prevost told OSV News. "He was a big Sox fan."

The 69-year old pope also did root for the Chicago Cubs, the Sox's crosstown rivals, but that was while he was away on mission in the deeply impoverished mountains of Peru, according to his superior at that time, retired Bishop Daniel Turley of the Chulucanas Diocese in northern Peru. A fellow Augustinian and Southsider, Turley said being far removed from home, living in South America, the missionaries supported all Chicago teams, including the Cubs.

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Then-Fr. Robert Prevost worked in the missions for about a dozen years shortly after completing his doctorate in canon law in Rome at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas, also called the Angelicum. In between mission stints, he spent a year as vocations director of the former major seminary run by the Midwest Augustinians province in a Chicago south suburb. Turley said with extensive travel back and forth, Prevost became a dual citizen holding both American and Peruvian citizenship.

He then became prior general of the Order of St. Augustine, visiting his religious order's communities worldwide, including those in far-flung areas where Christians are a minority.

Prevost held the post for 12 years then served as formator at the seminarians' theologate in Chicago for a couple of years. Then the late Pope Francis made him apostolic administrator (in 2014) and later bishop (in 2015) of the Diocese of Chiclayo, a few hundred miles north of Trujillo, Peru's third largest city, where a decade earlier he taught at the seminary of San Carlos and San Marcelo.

On Jan. 30, 2023, Francis appointed then-Bishop Prevost prefect of the Vatican Dicastery for Bishops and president of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America, naming him an archbishop. On Sept. 30 of that year, the pope named him a cardinal.

Leo's episcopal motto, which he first took as a bishop, is "In Illo uno unum," Latin for "In the One (Christ), we are one." It is a guiding phrase from one of St. Augustine's sermons and is seen as a signal his papacy will be heavily focused on unity.

This story appears in the **Pope Leo XIV** feature series. View the full series.