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Pope Leo XIV, after reciting the Angelus prayer at the Vatican, appeals for peace hours after the U.S. bombed nuclear enrichment facilities in Iran June 22, 2025. (CNS/Vatican Media)

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Hours after the United States bombed the sites of three nuclear-enrichment facilities in Iran, Pope Leo XIV called the situation in the Middle East "alarming" and said diplomacy was the only responsible way forward.

"Every member of the international community has a moral responsibility: Stop the tragedy of war before it becomes an irreparable abyss," the pope said June 22 after reciting the Angelus prayer with thousands of people in St. Peter's Square.

In Washington late June 21, President Donald Trump announced that "the U.S. military carried out massive precision strikes on the three key nuclear facilities in the Iranian regime: Fordo, Natanz and Isfahan."

"Our objective," Trump said, "was the destruction of Iran's nuclear enrichment capacity and a stop to the nuclear threat posed by the world's number one state sponsor of terror."

> 'Let diplomacy silence the weapons. Let nations chart their future with works of peace, not with violence and bloody conflicts!'
> —Pope Leo XIV
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"Tonight I can report to the world that the strikes were a spectacular military success," Trump said, adding that the facilities had been "completely and totally obliterated." The U.S. president also threatened that if Iran did not "make peace" then "future attacks would be far greater and a lot easier."

The U.S. bombings came 10 days after Israel began carrying out attacks on Iran's nuclear facilities and its military infrastructure, leading Iran to retaliate by firing missiles at Israel. Officials have reported that the strikes have killed at least 400 people in Iran and 24 people in Israel.

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Addressing the crowds in St. Peter's Square, Leo said people all over the world were praying and crying for peace.

"It is a cry that calls for responsibility and reason and must not be drowned out by the din of weapons," Leo said. "There is no faraway conflict when human dignity is at stake."

In addition, the pope said, with the "dramatic scenario" of the bombing of Iran, "the daily suffering of people, especially in Gaza and other territories, risks falling into oblivion" as the attention of the world turns elsewhere.

"War does not solve problems, but rather it amplifies them and produces deep wounds in the history of people that take generations to heal," he said. "No armed victory can compensate for the pain of mothers, the fear of children, the stolen future."

"Let diplomacy silence the weapons," Leo said. "Let nations chart their future with works of peace, not with violence and bloody conflicts!"

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