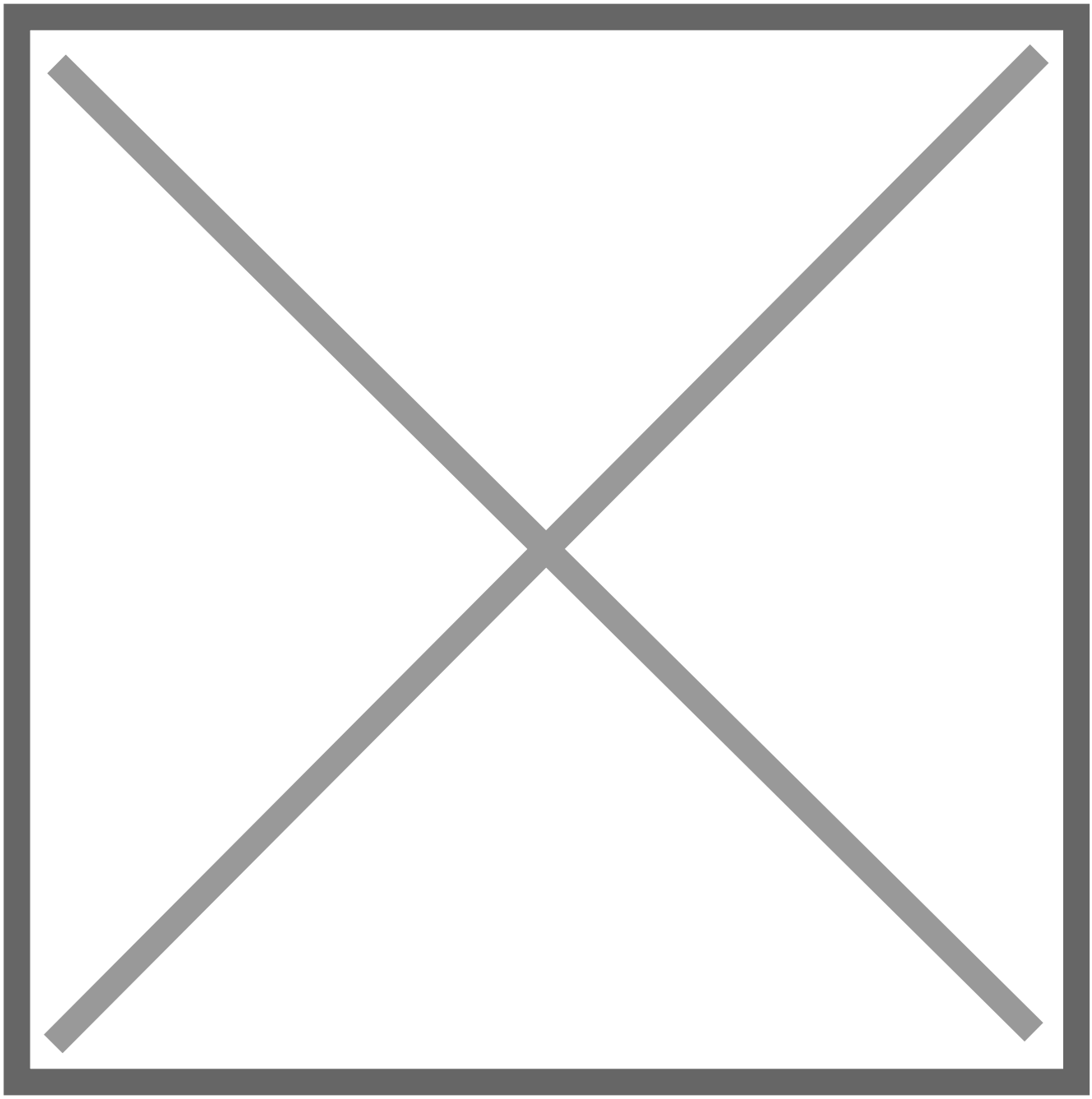
Vatican
Vatican News



Pope Leo XIV offers his greetings as he begins his weekly general audience in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican Dec. 10, 2025. (CNS/Lola Gomez)

by Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service

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Condemning the attack on Jews celebrating Hanukkah in Sydney, Pope Leo XIV said, "Enough with these forms of antisemitic violence! We must eradicate hatred from our hearts."

The pope prayed for "the victims of the terrorist massacre carried out" Dec. 14 when at least 15 people were killed and dozens were injured after two gunmen opened fire on the Jewish celebration near Sydney's famed Bondi Beach.

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Leo made his remarks Dec. 15 as he was greeting the government officials, artists and donors who provided the Christmas tree and Nativity scene in St. Peter's Square and the Christmas decorations in the Vatican audience hall.

The Nativity scene and tree "are signs of faith and hope," he said. Whether coming to the Vatican to see them or contemplating the creche and tree at home, "we ask the Lord to renew in us the gift of peace and fraternity."

"Let us pray for those who suffer because of war and violence," he added, mentioning in particular the victims of the attack in Australia.