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Copenhagen — January 27, 2026

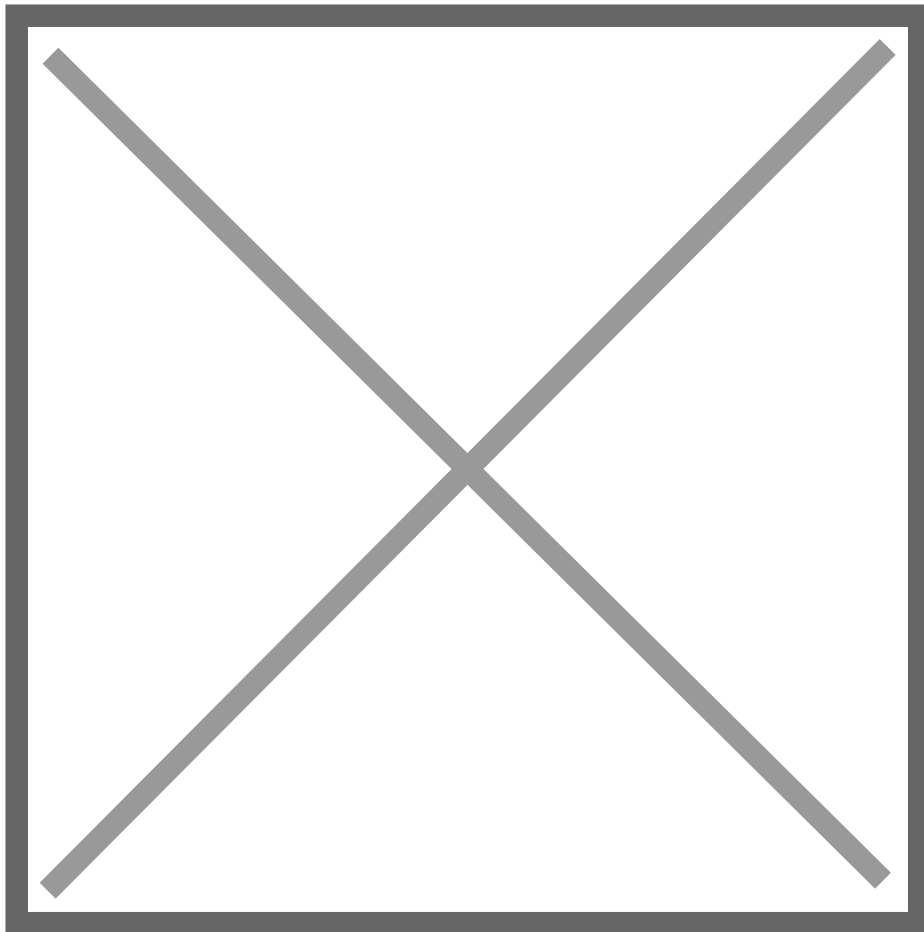
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Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, concluded a two-day visit in Denmark with a meeting with the country's king and foreign minister as tensions between Europe and the United States still loom.

King Frederik X posted a photo on Instagram with Parolin Jan. 26; however, neither the Danish monarch nor government officials revealed what was discussed.

Danish Foreign Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen also took to Instagram Jan. 26 highlighting his meeting with Parolin, as well as an earlier meeting with Jozef Sikela, European commissioner for international partnerships, and Greenlandic representative Tove Søvndahl Gant.

The Danish official and the Vatican secretary of state spoke about "a number of the world's current challenges," Rasmussen wrote.



Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, concluded a two-day visit in Denmark with a meeting with the country's King Frederik X Jan. 26, 2026. Frederik posted a photo of him with Parolin on Instagram, however, neither the Danish monarch nor government officials revealed what was discussed. (OSV News/Courtesy of the Instagram of the Danish Royal Family)

Parolin was in Denmark Jan. 24-26 on behalf of Pope Leo XIV, who appointed the cardinal as his papal legate to commemorate the 1,200th anniversary of the beginning of St. Ansgar's mission in Denmark. He celebrated Jan. 25 Mass at the Cathedral of Copenhagen emphasizing witness rooted in faith, not power, and warning against violations of sovereignty and the erosion of multilateral cooperation.

The evangelization of Denmark first began in A.D. 826, when Emperor Louis the Pious, who ruled as king of the Franks, sent St. Ansgar, a Benedictine monk known as the "Apostle of the North," to evangelize Denmark and Sweden during the Viking Age.

Although paganism maintained a strong foothold, St. Ansgar's missionary efforts bore fruit more than a century later, following the conversion of Danish King Harald Bluetooth to Christianity.

"Saint Ansgar, together with Saint Paul, the teacher of the Gentiles, is able to provide the witness of the Gospel of Christ with words and warnings, so that the saving message may be proclaimed enthusiastically and perseveringly everywhere," Leo wrote in his letter for the anniversary.

The cardinal's visit comes at a contentious time. Although President Donald Trump has announced the framework of a deal with NATO over Greenland, including possible sovereignty for U.S. bases, Denmark and other European countries have found themselves on the defensive against an allied country.

Neither the Trump administration nor NATO have released concrete details on the deal's parameters.

Parolin's meeting with the Danish king and foreign minister also took place on the eve of a Jan. 27 visit by French President Emmanuel Macron.

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The purpose of the visit was "to reaffirm European solidarity and France's support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Denmark and Greenland," Macron's office said, according to the Reuters news agency.

"The three leaders will discuss security challenges in the Arctic and the economic and social development of Greenland, which France and the European Union are ready to support," it added.

Parolin recently commented over increasing tensions over Greenland while speaking with journalists in Rome Jan. 17.

Responding to Trump's threats to acquire Greenland, recalled a lecture he delivered in which he argued that "conscience and reason can no longer tolerate violations of sovereignty in their most diverse forms."

The cardinal said that solutions based on force "cannot be used," and warned that the "spirit of multilateralism that characterized the postwar years" was "being lost."

"This is not acceptable, and will lead increasingly to conflict, to a war within the international community," he said.

During Jan. 25 Mass, Parolin said in his homily that "the Church remains credible not because of power, numbers, or strategies, but when faith becomes a lived witness, expressed and translated into concrete acts of liberation, justice and mercy that restore dignity and open paths to true freedom."

The secretary of state recalled that it was in the ninth century when the Benedictine monk arrived in Northern Europe for a mission founded not on "strategies or success, but on fidelity to Jesus," Vatican News reported.

St. Ansgar, the cardinal recalled, "faced enormous opposition and seemed to fail, but success was not what he sought" — something today we can treat as encouragement to "renew evangelical boldness" and "guard hope where history seems weary" to testify that fertility "comes from the love that unites and from trust in God's ongoing action, even in the most fragile situations."