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The 14th Dalai Lama, spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhists, is served food on his 90th birthday

The 14th Dalai Lama, spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhists, is served food on his 90th birthday celebration at the Dalai Lama Temple complex, in Dharamshala, India, July 6, 2025. The Dalai Lama has endorsed Pope Leo's message of peace. (OSV News/Reuters/Anushree Fadnavis)



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The Dalai Lama, the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhists, has "wholeheartedly" endorsed Pope Leo XIV's call for peace, aligning himself with the pope's Palm Sunday appeal for an end to violence and war.

"His call for the laying down of arms and the renunciation of violence resonated profoundly with me, as it speaks to the very essence of what all major religions teach," the Buddhist leader wrote in a post on X published March 31.

"Indeed, whether we look to Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, Judaism or any of the world's great spiritual traditions, the message is fundamentally the same: love, compassion, tolerance, and self-discipline," he continued. "Violence finds no true home in any of these teachings. History has shown us time and again that violence only begets more violence and is never a lasting foundation for peace."

Leo said in his first Palm Sunday Mass as pope that God "always rejects violence" and that no one can use the name of Jesus to "justify war."

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> —Dalai Llama
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The pope's comments stood in stark contrast to the religious rhetoric of Trump administration officials, such as Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, who has repeatedly invoked Jesus to pray for the United States and Israel's victory in the war with Iran.

Similarly, Orthodox Patriarch Kirill has cast Russia's war with Ukraine as a "holy war" intended to defend his country from corrupting Western influences.

In his post, the Dalai Lama said that an "enduring resolution to conflict, including the ones we see in the Middle East or between Russia and Ukraine, must be rooted in dialogue, diplomacy and mutual respect — approached with the understanding that, at the deepest level, we are all brothers and sisters."

"I urge for and pray that the violence and conflicts may soon come to an end," he wrote.

The pope has not met with the 90-year-old Buddhist leader, who is based in India; the Dalai Lama sent Leo a congratulatory letter upon Leo's election in May.

The current Dalai Lama has met with Popes Paul VI, John Paul II and Benedict XVI. During a 2014 visit to Rome for a summit of Nobel Peace Prize winners, however, he said he would not meet Pope Francis because "the Vatican administration says it is not possible because it could cause problems." The comment suggested concern

about the church's relations with China, which had labeled the spiritual leader a "political renegade."

The Vatican spokesman at the time, Jesuit Fr. Federico Lombardi, declined to say whether Francis himself had personally rejected a request for a meeting.

Four years later, the Vatican signed a provisional agreement on the appointment of bishops with the Chinese government, which has since been extended twice and is expected to last through October 2028.

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