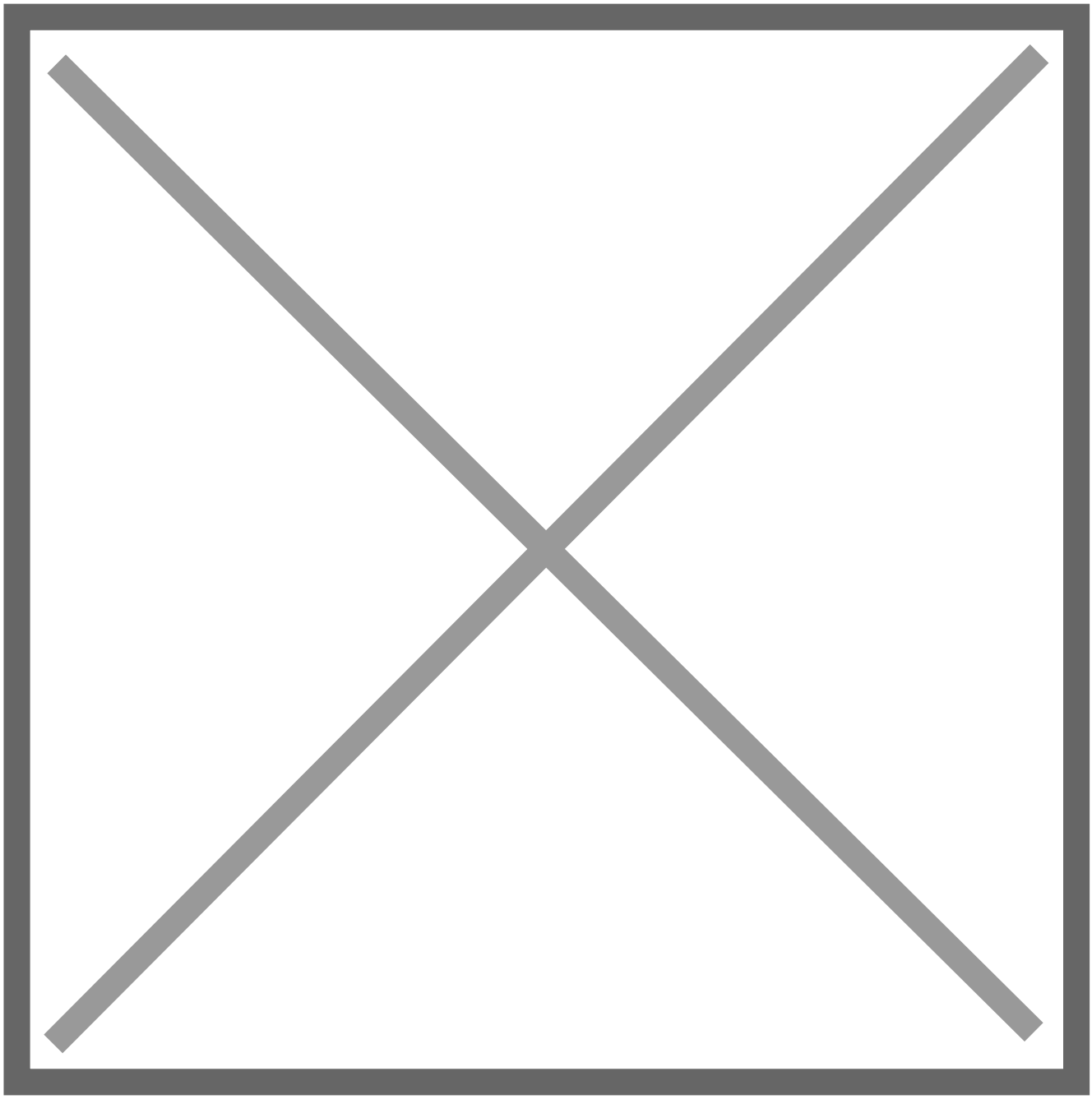
Vatican
Vatican News



Pope Leo XIV reacts on the day he presides over the Holy Mass on the Solemnity of Pentecost in St. Peter's Basilica, at the Vatican, May 24, 2026. (OSV News/Reuters/Matteo Minnella)

Josephine Peterson

View Author Profile



Catholic News Service

View Author Profile

Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

Vatican City — May 24, 2026
Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint

Pope Leo XIV celebrated Pentecost by highlighting the role of the Holy Spirit in his repeated calls for peace in recent months, saying the spirit also guides the Church to truth amid a world marked by war, division and ideological fragmentation.

During Mass in St. Peter's Basilica, the pope said the Holy Spirit continues Christ's work in the world by restoring peace through forgiveness and transforming fear and confusion into communion with God and others.

"Pentecost truly appears as the feast of the New Covenant, the Covenant between God and all the peoples of the world," the pope said May 24 in his homily marking the end of the Easter season.

Reflecting on the Gospel passage of Christ appearing to the apostles after the resurrection, Leo said Jesus restored peace between God and humanity through his Paschal Mystery and poured that peace into the world through the Holy Spirit.

"This peace stems from forgiveness and leads us to forgiveness," he said, emphasizing that Jesus first offered forgiveness even after being "betrayed, condemned and crucified."

"God's holy law is inscribed in our hearts, engraved by the spirit with letters of love in the flesh of Christ and in his body the Church," Leo said. "This law is the rule of peace: It is the twofold commandment of love that the spirit reminds us of with

every heartbeat."

Turning to the Church's mission, the pope said Christians are called to continue proclaiming Christ through acts of mercy, virtue and witness in daily life. Calling the faithful "coworkers of the Gospel," he said the Holy Spirit transforms believers into agents of reconciliation and hope.

"The work of God, therefore, is each one of us, who came here today from all parts of the world, invited to the Lord's table, gathered to listen to his word and called to bear witness to it everywhere," he said.

The pope also described the Holy Spirit as the source of unity and truth within the Church, warning against "partisanship, hypocrisy and fads that obscure the light of the Gospel."

While acknowledging that some changes in the modern world have brought "error and violence," Leo said the Holy Spirit continues to renew humanity and introduce salvation.

Advertisement

"The Church's mission bears witness to this offer, thereby transforming the world's confusion into communion with God and among ourselves," he said.

Concluding his homily, the pope prayed for the Holy Spirit to free the world from war, misery and sin.

"Dear friends, with fervent hearts, let us pray today that the spirit of the Risen One may save us from the evil of war, which is overcome not by a superpower, but by the omnipotence of love," he said.

In his Regina Caeli address after Mass, Leo said the Holy Spirit "opens doors," saying it gave the apostles the courage to leave the locked room following Jesus' death and proclaim Christ.

The pope said the Holy Spirit opens three doors: the door to encountering God personally, the door of the Church so it can remain welcoming to all and engaged with the modern world, and the door of the human heart, overcoming "selfishness, mistrust and prejudice."

"We need to rediscover God as the father who loves us, so that we can form a Church where everyone feels at home, and build a fraternal world where peace reigns among all peoples," he said from the window of the Apostolic Palace, a day before releasing his first encyclical Magnifica Humanitas on the care of the human person in the time of artificial intelligence.

After the Regina Caeli prayer, Leo commemorated the Day of Prayer for the Church in China and prayed for victims of a mining accident in northern China that reportedly killed 82 people. He also prayed for Christian communities in the Holy Land, Lebanon and across the Middle East suffering due to the ongoing conflict.