



A banner reading "Ematology greets the pope" hangs from a window of the Agostino Gemelli Polyclinic where Pope Leo XIV is hospitalised, in Rome, Thursday, Oct. 15, 2026. (AP/Alessandra Tarantino)

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Pope Leo XIV met with a top aide on Thursday and resumed working from the hospital, as doctors reported his lung had recovered well from [surgery to remove a cancerous nodule](#).

Leo's post-operative tests remained within normal levels and his physiotherapy session Thursday involved full mobility exercises, with the pope going about his daily activities independently, said the update from Leo's personal doctor, Dr. Luigi Carbone, and the head of thoracic surgery at Gemelli hospital, Dr. Stefano Margaritora.

"The chest X-ray revealed good recovery of the operated lung," they reported. "Overall, his postoperative recovery is proceeding as expected."

Separately, the Vatican said Leo had received the Vatican chief of staff, or "substitute," Archbishop Paolo Rudelli, and had resumed working from the hospital. Rudelli handles much of the day-to-day administrative work of the Holy See.

For a second day Leo celebrated Mass with other priests in a special chapel set up near his room on the 10th floor of the hospital, spokesman Matteo Bruni said.

The 71-year-old Leo had the lower right lobe of his right lung removed on Tuesday after doctors identified a suspected cancerous nodule. The surgery confirmed [he had adenocarcinoma](#), the most common type of lung cancer.

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Doctors are still awaiting the results of tests to understand the precise molecular makeup of the cancer, whether it has spread beyond the lobe and whether any further treatment is necessary.

Asked if any changes to Leo's [planned trip to South America](#) from Nov. 6-17 were expected, Bruni pointed to Leo's words on Sunday when he announced the discovery of the nodule and impending surgery.

"Thank you for your prayers for the pastoral visit I will make to Peru," Leo said Sunday in Spanish, in a greeting delivered to a Peruvian group. The trip is also scheduled to include stops in Uruguay and Argentina.

Leo is expected to remain hospitalized until at least Oct. 20.