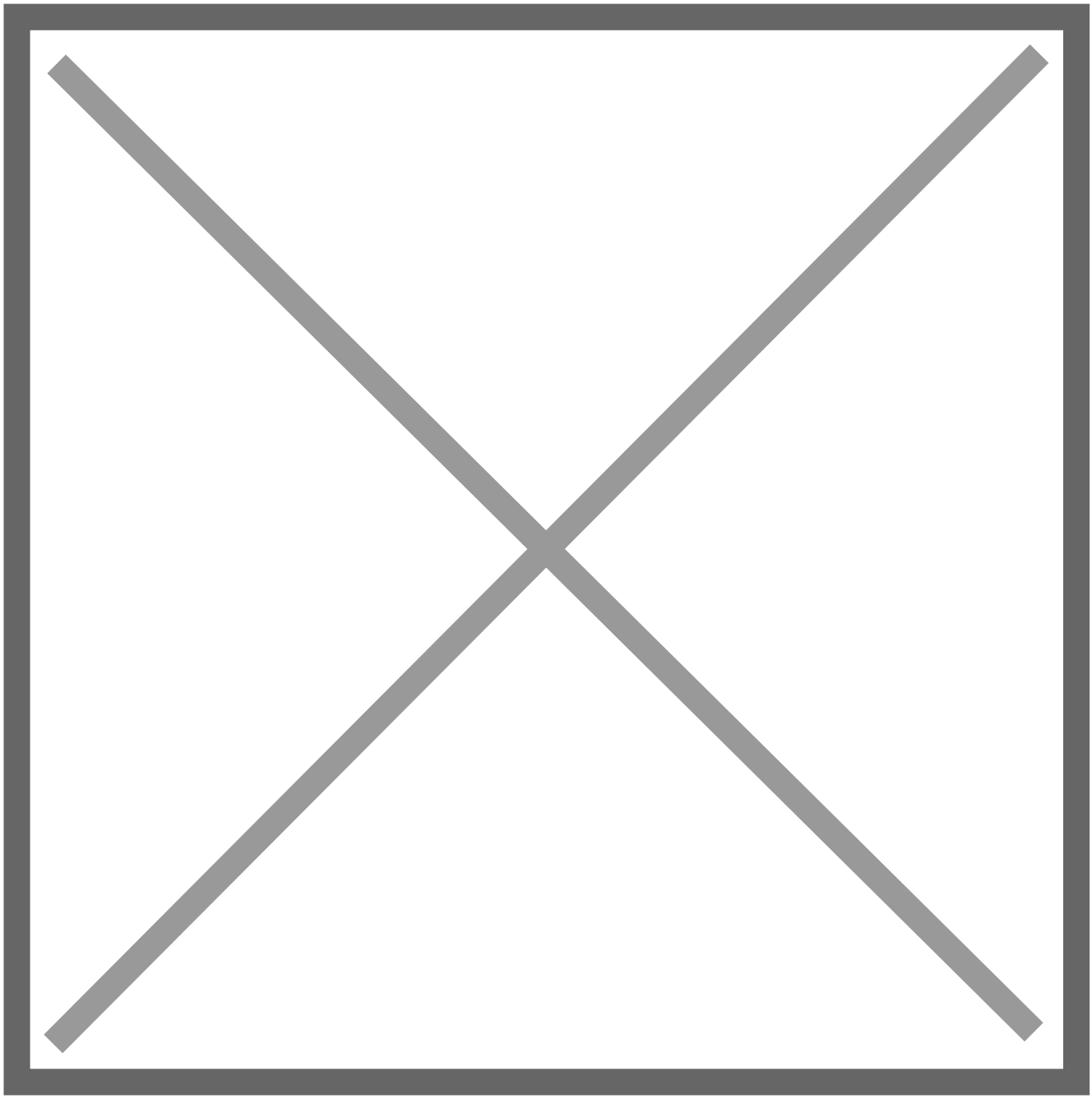
Vatican
Vatican News



A drone view shows the Basilica of Luján in Argentina on the outskirts of Buenos Aires, Oct. 4 2026. Following Pope Leo XIV's Oct. 13 cancer surgery and the announcement on Oct. 26 that he needs no further treatment, the Holy See Press Office confirmed that the apostolic journey of the pontiff to Argentina, Peru and Uruguay, scheduled for Nov. 6–17, will proceed according to the program previously published. (OSV News/Reuters/Antonio Becerra Pegoraro)

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Two weeks after Pope Leo XIV's surgery for lung cancer, his doctor confirmed he can fly to South America according to the previously released schedule, with Uruguay, Argentina and Peru planned as stops for his Nov. 6-17 trip, the longest trip of the pontificate so far.

"Based on his current clinical status, as well as the instrumental and laboratory tests performed, there are no contraindications that would prevent him from undertaking his upcoming apostolic journey to Latin America as planned," Dr. Luigi Carbone, the papal doctor said in a statement released by the Holy See Press Office Oct. 26.

The pope "is following medical recommendations with great care and diligence, and with a deep determination to continue serving the Church," the statement read, confirming that the apostolic trip to South America "will proceed according to the program previously published."

"The Holy Father looks forward with great joy and enthusiasm to this journey," it added, highlighting that the trip — to the continent where Pope Leo served as a missionary and where he was a bishop — will offer "opportunities to strengthen the bonds of communion with the local Churches, encourage the faithful in their mission, and bring a message of faith, hope, and peace."

"I am looking forward to returning to the continent where I've experienced so many moments of my life," Leo said, according to the statement. "May this journey be an occasion for us to open our hearts to one another, strengthen our communion as brothers and sisters, and renew our commitment to proclaiming the Gospel with joy."

Advance team lands in Peru for final preparatory visit

Msgr. Guillermo Inca Pereda, coordinator of Leo visit to Peru, confirmed to Peruvian TV station TVPE Noticias that the news aboutLeo's surgery never interrupted preparations for the trip and that the third advance team mission from the Vatican arrived in Peru Oct. 26.

The media speculated that parts of the schedule could be altered, especially the high altitude trip to Cusco, which is located 11,1500 feet above sea level, and it is recommended that even a healthy person adjust before planning intense activities.

Guillermo confirmed however that Cusco — on the papal itinerary for Nov. 15 — was not excluded from the papal visit to Peru.

"Nothing is ruled out. Everything remains as the Holy Father envisioned it. He always wanted to go to Cusco because it holds an important significance: the encounter with the popular faith and religiosity of the region," he told the Peruvian television channel. "He wants to be there. That's why I believe Cusco will always be on his list," he said.

However, Peruvian organizers remain extra cautious regarding the trip, and for his Nov. 11-16 encounter with the nation, "he will have a specialized ambulance, as befits a head of state, which will accompany the delegation at all times," Guillermo said.

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"In the case of Santa Cruz, the possibility of having an ambulance helicopter is being considered in case of any eventuality. In addition to his own doctor, there will be a Peruvian doctor prepared to attend to any situation," the prelate said of another high altitude town in the Andes Mountains, which the pope plans to visit Nov. 14.

Doctors report post surgery progress

Papal medical team confirmed in the Oct. 26 statement that the pope's "recovery continues to progress," and that since returning to the Vatican Oct. 17, "the Holy Father has gradually resumed his activities, adjusting his daily schedule in consultation with his doctors to prioritize his recovery while continuing to fulfill the responsibilities of his ministry."

The papal doctor said that while the pope "has maintained important appointments and public engagements" he also had "appropriate periods of rest."

"The Holy Father remains deeply grateful for the prayers and affection he has received from throughout the world and for the dedicated care of the medical professionals who have accompanied him during his recovery," the statement read.

"Dr. Luigi Carbone confirms that the Holy Father's recovery after the surgery continues, and the latest medical examinations attest to his good health and favorable clinical condition."

Longest and most demanding trip to date

Leo will travel more than 19,000 miles on 14 flights during the November trip to Peru, Argentina and Uruguay, according to the full schedule the Vatican released Sept. 21, which the Vatican did not indicate would change in the Oct. 26 statement.

The Nov. 6-17 trip will be the first papal visit to Latin America of Leo’s pontificate. Over 12 days, he will celebrate nine public Masses, visit seven cathedrals and preside over two stadium prayer vigils. The trip culminates with a return to Chiclayo, Peru, where he served as bishop from 2015 to 2023.

The journey begins Nov. 6 with a flight of more than 14 hours and 6,900 miles from Rome to Montevideo, Uruguay. The return flight from Lima, Peru, to Rome covers 6,700 miles. In between, the pope will travel to a new destination nearly every day, including a 2,200-mile flight from Buenos Aires to Lima and a military helicopter flight Nov. 14 to the Andes mountain town of Santa Cruz de Succhabamba, Peru.

By comparison, Leo traveled 11,000 miles over 11 days during his trip to Algeria, Cameroon, Angola and Equatorial Guinea earlier this year.

This story appears in the **Pope Leo in Uruguay, Argentina and Peru** feature series. View the full series.