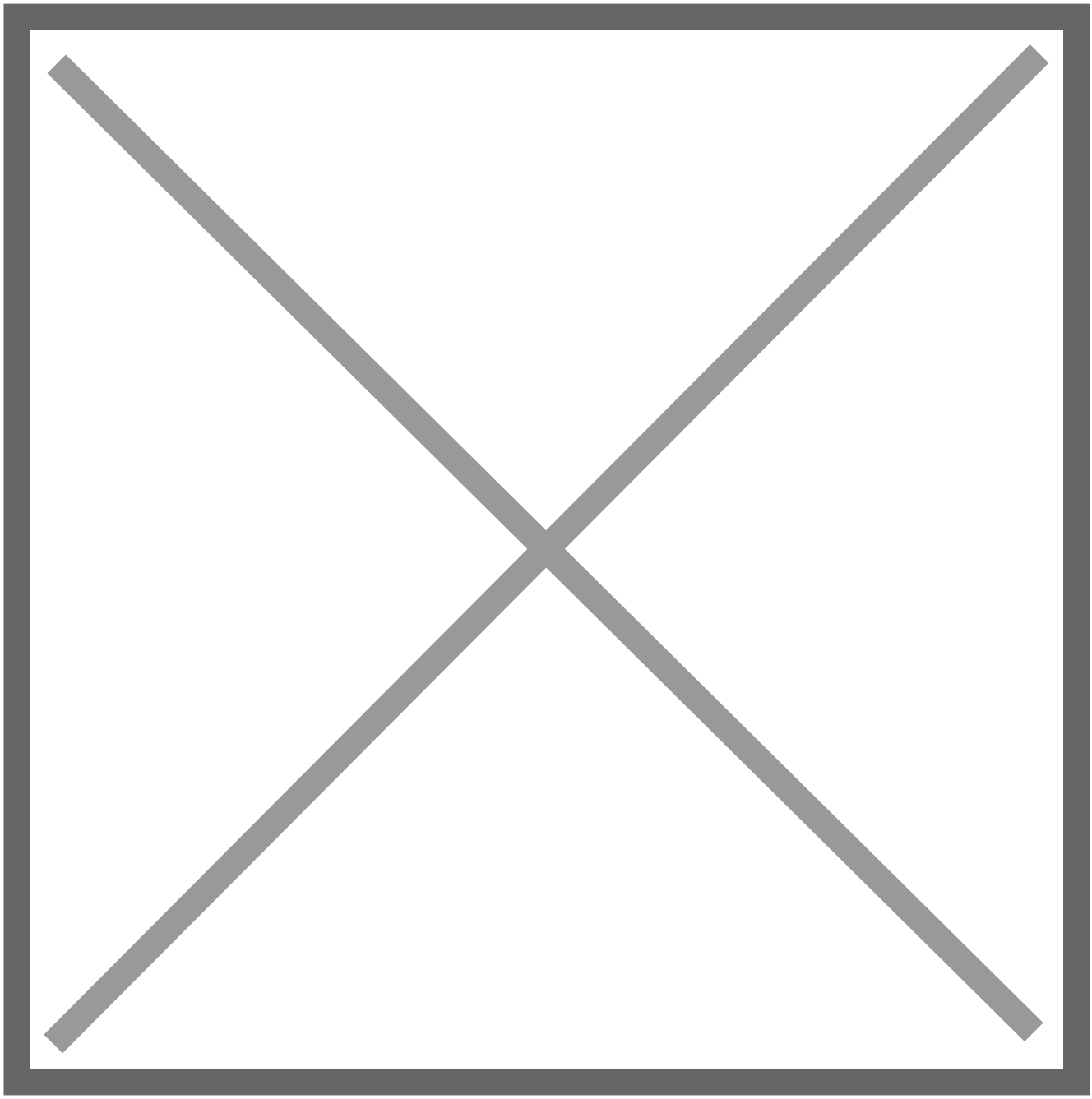
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Pope Leo XIV waves as he arrives to celebrate Mass on the grounds of the Military Aviation School in Córdoba, Argentina, Nov. 10, 2026, during his Nov. 6-17 apostolic journey to Uruguay, Argentina and Peru. (OSV News/Reuters/Yara Nardi)



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Córdoba. Argentina — November 10, 2026

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Pope Leo XIV traveled to Córdoba in central Argentina, where he recalled the example of Argentina's saints — who spread the Gospel and tirelessly served peoples in a rugged frontier — while emphasizing the enduring importance of missions.

Celebrating Mass outside an aircraft manufacturing facility on the outskirts of Argentina's second-largest city on Nov. 10, Leo spoke of St. José Gabriel del Rosario Brochero and St. María Antonia de Paz Figueroa, "who were called by the Lord and sent on mission, without even realizing how extraordinary their evangelizing work would be. Indeed, we too, like all Christians, are merely humble servants, and all we must do is fulfil our duty."

"We are all called to holiness. This is our task here on earth: to attain perfect union with God," the pope continued. "This calling is always missionary: we must make known to others the beauty that we have come to know in Christ."

Overflowing crowds welcomed Leo to Cordóba, an industrial city of 1.6 million residents some 430 miles northwest of Buenos Aires. The city is home to the Manzana Jesuítica — the Jesuit Block — which was founded by the Society of Jesus in 1599, where Pope Francis spent two years in the early 1990s living in an austere room as a Jesuit priest during a time of prayer and reflection.

Leo celebrated Mass in front of a large cross commissioned by Fr. Brochero, while he was lying on his sickbed after contracting leprosy while working to tend to the ill and forgotten. He was known as the "gaucho priest" who traveled the vast Andean foothills on mule to evangelize and serve Catholic populations in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

"This priest was truly in love with the Lord and knew how to draw strength for his life from prayer," Leo said in his homily. "Only those who have experienced friendship with Jesus Christ are capable of undertaking the task of evangelization; only those who know they are loved by the Lord are capable of extending his kingdom of charity and justice, devoting all their energies to proclaiming the Gospel, armed with nothing but the crucifix and the holy rosary."

The pope also remembered St. María Antonia de Paz Figueroa, known affectionately as Mama Antula.

She "knew how to combine contemplation with service to neighbor, recognizing that the greatest act of fraternal charity is to bring others closer to God," Leo said. "As my revered predecessor Pope Francis reminded us, the poor need God and people who express the power of Christian love in their lives. Following this same inspiration, Mama Antula tirelessly traveled the length and breadth of this country to show countless people the path to heaven."

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Leo also cited other examples important for Argentine Catholics, telling the estimated 650,000 people attending Mass in Córdoba, "These saints and blesseds have already fulfilled their mission on earth. Today, it is our turn to follow the radiant example of holiness they have left with us."

He added, "We celebrate this Holy Mass for the sanctification of the people of Argentina, for the sanctification of all of you. Open your hearts, and with God's

grace, go forth and be holy: at school and in the town square, in family life and with friends, in the countryside and in the city, on the farm and in the office. Go, evangelize!"

Mass in Córdoba was delayed by 15 minutes after Leo stopped to attend to someone in the section for people with disabilities. After Mass, the pope was expected to meet with 20 individuals chosen by the Archdiocese of Córdoba's vicariate for the poor, according to local media. They included a migrant community leader, a survivor of human trafficking and a person still searching for the remains of their parents who were disappeared nearly 50 years ago during the country's military dictatorship.

Leo is scheduled to address priests, religious and seminarians in Córdoba, then return to Buenos Aires for a youth vigil. On Nov. 11, his last day in Argentina, the pope will visit a prison in Buenos Aires, then celebrate Mass in front of the Basilica of Our Lady of Luján, home to the national patroness — then fly onward to Peru.

Gigantic crowds turned out for Leo's visit to Argentina, the second stop on a three-country apostolic trip to South America that began Nov. 6 in Uruguay.

Leo celebrated Mass with 2.5 million people in the heart of Buenos Aires on Nov. 9, drawing the largest crowd of his pontificate so far, which some priests say reflects signs of renewed interest in Catholicism amid hard economic times.

"Leo comes to renew our missionary calling, our baptismal vocation," Fr. Kevin Córdoba, a priest from southern Chabut province, who attended the Mass in Córdoba, told OSV News.

"The pope's presence reminds us that Christ sends us to immerse the miseries of this world in a fraternal and paternal embrace, bringing with him teachings that anchor us in the mystery of unity. I hope and believe that the Spirit is being poured out upon Argentina today, like a new Pentecost."

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