“Leo from Chicago,” Vatican media’s documentary on Pope Leo XIV’s United States roots

“Leo from Chicago,” a documentary coming soon on Vatican media’s channels, will offer viewers an intimate portrait of Pope Leo XIV’s early life throughout the United States, beginning with the testimonies of his brothers Louis and John, along with numerous voices, images, and stories told by those closest to the man who, since May 8, 2025, has led the universal Catholic Church.

With a glance at Pope Leo’s childhood, family ties, friendships, studies, formation, vocation, first steps in consecrated life, social commitment, sporting passions, and food preferences, *Leo from Chicago* offers an in-depth and, in many ways, previously unseen portrait of Pope Leo XIV. This documentary, produced by the Vatican’s Dicastery for Communication in collaboration with the Archdiocese of Chicago and the Apostolado El Sembrador Nueva Evangelización (ESNE), retraces the history and roots of the Pope in his native land: the United States.

The journey—carried out by journalists Deborah Castellano Lubov, Salvatore Cernuzio, and Felipe Herrera-Espaliat—unfolds through the neighborhoods of Chicago, beginning at the Prevost’s family home in Dolton, with memories and stories shared by his two brothers, Louis Martin and John. It then moves to the offices, schools, and parishes led by the Augustinians; the Catholic Theological Union; and the places often visited by the then-Father Robert Francis Prevost, such as *Aurelio’s Pizza* restaurant or Rate Field, the stadium of the Chicago White Sox baseball team. The itinerary extends further to Villanova University, just outside of Philadelphia, and to Port Charlotte, Florida, to visit his older brother.

Moreover, in the production, some 30 people close to the Pope provide testimonies, helping to paint a richer picture of the man who, since May 8, has been called to lead the universal Church, revealing a man who, even as a young child, showed a calling to the religious life, evidenced by his ‘celebrating’ Mass and reciting prayers in Latin. Moreover, it shows a young man who entered the path of discernment to join the Order of St. Augustine, who pursued studies in mathematics and theology, forming authentic bonds with fellow students and

engaging in initiatives to protect life. It also showcases a man who left his homeland to serve in Peru and who led one of the most global religious orders in the world with calm demeanor and decisive leadership, while always remaining a man who listened to music from the 1960s and ’70s, loved to drive, watched TV, and passionately followed baseball.

Leo from Chicago follows the documentary *León de Perú*, released in June, which covered Prevost’s years of mission in the South American country. *Leo from Chicago* will be released soon on the media channels of the Vatican.

* *Published on Vatican News.*