Pope Leo XIV: “Peace cannot be built with mutual threats or weapons”

“War again!” lamented Pope Leo XIV on the afternoon of Sunday, 1 March, before the parishioners of the Parish of the Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ in Rome, visibly disheartened by the conflict in the Middle East following the attacks by the United States and Israel on Iran, as well as the Iranian response that is impacting several countries in the region.

“From this moment on, I am very concerned, and we do not know how many days it will last, about the situation in the Middle East,” said the Bishop of Rome, recalling that **“we must be heralds of the peace of Jesus, which God wants for everyone**.”

Praying for peace

The Pope also emphasised the need to pray for peace: “We must pray hard for peace, live in unity, and reject the temptation to harm others; **violence is never the right choice**.”

Earlier, during the Angelus prayer in St Peter’s Square, Robert Prevost had also expressed his deep concern about what is happening in the Middle East and Iran “in these dramatic hours”.

Stopping the spiral of violence

“**Stability and peace are not built with mutual threats, nor with the use of weapons, which show destruction, suffering and death**, but only through reasonable, sincere, and responsible dialogue,” said the Pope, making an urgent appeal “to all the parties involved to assume the moral responsibility of halting the spiral of violence before it becomes an unbridgeable chasm” as an alternative “to the possibility of a tragedy of immense proportions”.

“May diplomacy regain its proper role and may the well-being of peoples, who yearn for peaceful existence founded on justice, be upheld. And let us continue to pray for peace,” added Pope Leo XIV.