Pope Leo XIV: “We want to be a small leaven of unity, communion and fraternity”

“Brothers and sisters, **I would like a united Church, a sign of unity and communion, which becomes a leaven for a reconciled world**”. This was the first wish expressed by Pope Leo XIV at the Mass marking the beginning of his pontificate on Sunday 18 May in St. Peter’s Square, with the participation of more than 200,000 people, including a good part of the College of Cardinals, hundreds of bishops, priests, religious men and women, and some 150 delegations from various countries, churches and international organisations.

Universal fraternity

Br. Joël Palud, General Councillor of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, consulted by the television channel France 24 at the end of the Eucharist, remarked that “the first theme that emerged was undoubtedly a call to unity (…). In this sense, it is in line with Pope Francis and *Fratelli tutti*. So, I think it is a profound spiritual message, but at the service of a humanity that needs to be reconciled”.



As Robert Prevost begins his Petrine ministry, he is aware that, “in our time, we still see too much discord, too many wounds caused by hatred, violence, prejudice, the fear of difference, and an **economic paradigm that exploits the Earth’s resources and marginalises the poorest**”.

“We live in a truly turbulent world”, noted Br Joël, underlining the Pope’s call for peace in his earlier speeches and homilies.

“In Christ we are one”

In the face of this, “**we want to be, within this mass, a small leaven of unity, communion and fraternity”,** said the Bishop of Rome, pondering that “love and unity: these are the two dimensions of the mission that Jesus entrusted to Peter, to form his one family: in the one Christ we are one”.

Consequently, Leo XIV encouraged the Church to “offer the love of God to all, so that **this unity which does not cancel out differences, but values the personal history of each person and the social and religious culture of each people,** may be realised”. Thus, from a missionary perspective, “the spirit that should animate us, without shutting ourselves up in our own little group or feeling superior to the world”.

“**This is the path to follow together, among ourselves but also with our sister Christian Churches**, with those who follow other religious paths, with those who are searching for God, with all women and men of good will, in order to build a new world where peace reigns”, the Pontiff emphasised.

Here emerges “the lineage of Pope Francis with this Church that goes out to the peripheries”, Brother Joël asserted before the cameras of France24, “and I believe that in this is embodied the missionary dimension of the Church”, he continued, because “**it is difficult to speak of being at the service of a Church that suffers without being with this Church that suffers and in all the places where it may be suffering**”.

This is why “Pope Leo XIV placed his own ministry in the right place: ‘I am here to walk with you’, wherever you are, and this is indeed the experience of religious life, of missionaries who are close to the ground and who are truly at the service of humanity. This fraternity is not built in Vatican offices, as the Pope knows, it is built where people suffer”, concluded Br. Joël Palud.