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The Statement of The Most Reverend Salvatore R. Matano, Bishop of Rochester, upon the Election of His Holiness, Pope Leo XIV May 8, 2025

It is with great joy that the Diocese of Rochester joins with the Universal Church in pledging our heartfelt prayers, support and fidelity to our newly elected Holy Father, His Holiness Pope Leo XIV, the 266th successor to Saint Peter and the 267th Vicar of Christ on earth. United to the See of Peter by the bonds of faith and charity, we offer to our Holy Father our filial devotion in continuing the mission of the Church entrusted to her by her founder Jesus Christ, the cornerstone of the Church. Certainly, it is an extraordinary moment for the church in the United States as a native son, inspired by the life of Saint Augustine and of the order bearing his name, now occupies the Chair of Peter.

Guided by the wisdom and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the College of Cardinals, representing the universality and multicultural richness of the Church, have elected still another Holy Father in the image of the Good Shepherd, whose Vicar he now is and to whom the mandate is again given to confirm and strengthen his brothers and sisters in the faith (cf. Luke 22:32). Once more we are at the Sea of Tiberias and the words Jesus addressed to the first Pope, Saint Peter, are now addressed to His Holiness, Pope Leo XIV, “Feed my sheep” (cf. John 21:17).

As I have previously mentioned, how blessed many of us have been to live during the pontificates of such outstanding popes: Saint John XXIII, who embraced the whole world in his universal call for renewing the faith in Christ; Saint Paul VI, who gave his life to the Church with an undivided heart and never faltered under or feared the weight of the

cross; Blessed John Paul I, whose humble and gentle manner in a time so brief revealed the heart of the Good Shepherd; Saint John Paul II, whose charisma and dynamic personality captured the hearts of believers and non-believers alike; Pope Benedict XVI, the scholar, the theologian, the teacher, but above all that holy man who helped us in clear and simple terms to understand the mystery of God, the mystery which enveloped his life in his intimate communion with the Lord; and Pope Francis, the apostle of mercy, the messenger of hope, the shepherd who sought out that lost sheep, the one who united his heart to the heart of Christ.

Now, His Holiness, Pope Leo XIV, begins his pontificate supported by the legacy of these good and holy, Christ-like pontiffs, who preceded him; he now takes his place as successor to Saint Peter and Vicar of Christ. We now pray for him at every celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, asking the Lord to make him a beacon of faith, hope and charity, carrying the message of Christ's peace to all people.

As we continue to experience the joy of this Easter Season celebrating Christ's glorious Resurrection, we now rejoice that the courage, hope and enduring presence of Christ emanating from that empty tomb, which would inspire those first Apostles to proclaim the truth of Christ throughout the world under Peter's leadership, now continues in this unbroken link of apostolic succession in our newly elected Pontiff. With one voice we cry out, "Alleluia!" "Habemus Papam!" "We have a Pope!"

I will offer a Mass of Thanksgiving on Sunday, May 11, 2025, at the 11:15 a.m. Mass at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Rochester. A Diocesan Solemn Mass of Thanksgiving upon the Installation of Pope Leo XIV will be offered at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart.