



## THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PHOENIX

April 13, 2026

### **STATEMENT FROM BISHOP JOHN DOLAN**

"In response to recent comments by Donald J. Trump regarding His Holiness Pope Leo XIV, I would like to offer a few reflections rooted both in truth and in our faith.

First, The Holy Father is elected through the sacred process of the conclave, carried out by the College of Cardinals under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This is not a political appointment, nor is it subject to influence by any head of state. The Church entrusts this moment to prayer, discernment, and divine guidance.

Second, we have just celebrated the great mystery of Easter. In the Upper Room, the Risen Lord—Jesus Christ—appeared to His apostles, showed them His wounds, and spoke the words, "Peace be with you." He breathed the Holy Spirit upon them. This moment is not only the foundation of the Church, but also a profound reminder that peace—not power, not force, not victory in worldly terms—is the gift Christ gives to His people.

Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world. There is no other. Our freedom does not come from war, political strength, or human achievement, but from the Cross and the Resurrection. It is Christ who liberates us from sin and death. War may at times be a tragic necessity against aggression in a fallen world, but it is never our salvation.

Pope Leo has consistently called us to remember this truth: before we lean into conflict, we must first lean into God. The Church does not exist to advance political agendas, but to proclaim the Gospel, to form consciences, and to remind the world of the dignity of every human person.

It is important to say clearly: the Holy Father is not a politician, nor should he be reduced to one. His role is to shepherd souls, to call us to holiness, and to point us toward Christ, the Prince of peace. When he speaks about peace, justice, or the moral dimensions of global affairs, he does so not as a partisan voice, but as a pastor of the universal Church.

At a time when public discourse can become harsh and divisive, we would all do well to return to the words of the Risen Lord: "Peace be with you." That peace is not weakness, but rather the strength of God. It is the power that transforms hearts, heals wounds, and ultimately brings about the only lasting victory: the triumph of love over sin and death.

As Catholics, and as people of goodwill, let us remain rooted in Christ, respectful in our dialogue, and steadfast in our mission to be instruments of His peace in the world."

Bishop John Dolan

ENCOUNTERING THE LIVING CHRIST

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