



Peace Be with You

Pope Leo XIV

ISBN: 0063566087

Category: Non-Fiction, Religion & Spirituality

Themes: Peace, War, Jesus Christ - Son of the living God, Holy Spirit, Justice, Truth, Charity, Love, Unity, Hope

Date Read: April 2026

Rating: ♥ ♥ ♥

My Book Notes:

Pope Leo XIV was born in Chicago. He has a degree in mathematics; a master's in theology, and a doctorate in canon law from Rome. He speaks five languages. He spent

20 years living and working with the poor in Peru. He was elected in May 2025, the first pope from the United States in two thousand years of Catholic history.

Peace is when our heart and our life are inhabited by silence, meditation, and listening to God.

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The heart is the source of peace: there we must learn to meet rather than clash with each other, to trust and not mistrust, to listen and understand instead of closing ourselves to others.

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Peace be with you! It is the peace of the Risen Christ. A peace that is unarmed and disarming, humble and persevering. A peace that comes from God, the God who loves us, unconditionally.

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We want to be a Church that moves forward, a church that always seeks peace, that always seeks charity, that always seeks to be close above all to those who are suffering.

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Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God: the one Saviour, who alone reveals the face of the Father.

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A lack of faith is often tragically accompanied by the loss of meaning in life, the neglect of mercy, appalling violations of human dignity, the crisis of the family, and so many other wounds that afflict our society.

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It is the Risen Lord, present among us, who protects and guides the Church and continues to fill her with hope through the love 'poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.' (Rom 5:5)

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How important it is to listen! Jesus says, 'My sheep listen to my voice.' (John 10:27). It is important for all of us to learn how to listen more, to enter into dialogue. First and foremost, with the Lord: Always listen to the word of God. Then also listen to others, to know how to build bridges, to know how to listen without judging, not closing the doors thinking that we have all the truth and no one else can tell us anything.

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Only informed individuals can make free choices.

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Disarmed and disarming communication allows us to share a different view of the world and to act in a manner consistent with our human dignity.

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The Church's aspiration – and my own – to reach out and embrace all individuals and peoples on the Earth, who need and yearn for truth, justice, and peace!

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Peace is an active and demanding gift. It demands that we work on ourselves. Peace is built in the heart and from the heart, by eliminating pride and vindictiveness and carefully choosing our words. For words too, not only weapons, can wound and even kill.

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Working for peace requires acting justly. Every effort should be made to overcome the global inequalities – between opulence and destitution – that are carving deep divides between continents and countries, and even within individual societies.

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Truly peaceful relationships cannot be built apart from truth. Where words take on ambiguous and ambivalent connotations, and the virtual world, with its altered perception of reality, takes over unchecked, it is difficult to build authentic relationships, since the objective and real premises of communication are lacking.

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Truth can never be separated from charity.

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From the Christian perspective, truth is not the affirmation of abstract and disembodied principles, but an encounter with the person of Christ himself, alive in the midst of the community of believers.

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Love and unity: These are the two dimensions of the mission entrusted to Peter by Jesus.

How can Peter carry out this task? The Gospel tells us that it is possible only because his own life was touched by the infinite and unconditional love of God, even in the hour of his failure and denial. Peter is entrusted with the task of ‘loving more’ and giving his life for the flock.

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‘How can we choose unless we have first been chosen? We cannot love unless someone has loved us first.’ St Augustine

At the root of every vocation, God is present, in his mercy and goodness, as generous as that of a mother (cf. Is 66:11-13) who nourishes her child with her own body for as long as the child is unable to feed itself.

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When the Lord appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus (cf. Acts 9:1-30), he did not take away his freedom, but gave him the opportunity to make a decision, to choose an obedience that would prove costly and entail interior and exterior struggles, which Paul proved willing to face.

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Salvation does not come about by magic, but by a mysterious interplay of grace and faith.

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‘God loves us. This is the great truth of our life; it is what makes everything else meaningful.’ Indeed, ‘our life originates as part of a loving plan of God,’ and faith leads us to ‘open our hearts to this mystery of love and to live as men and women conscious of being loved by God.’ **Pope Benedict XVI**

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Memory is an essential element in a living organism. It is not only directed to the past but nourishes the present and guides the future. Without memory, the path is lost, it loses its sense of direction.

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Each person can be a builder of unity with his attitudes toward colleagues, overcoming inevitable misunderstandings with patience, with humility, putting himself in the shoes of others, avoiding prejudices, and also with a good dose of humour.

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The more we let ourselves be convinced and transformed by the Gospel – allowing the power of the Spirit to purify our hearts, to make our words straightforward, our desires honest and clear, and our actions generous – the more capable we are of proclaiming its message.

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All the good we do in the exercise of our ministry is the work of Christ and not our own, for we can do nothing without him. Let us live our faith in search of hope, but seeking to be ourselves the witness that offers hope to the world. A world that suffers a great deal of pain due to wars, violence, and poverty! The Lord asks us as Christians always to be this living witness. To live our faith, feeling in our heart that Jesus Christ is present and to know that he always accompanies us on our journey.

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It is not an impulsive action, but rather the gentle breeze that restored hope to the prophet Elijah when he was in despair (cf. 1 Kgs 19:12)

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Self-centredness extinguishes the fire of the missionary spirit.

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Families are the cradle of the future of humanity.

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Marriage is not an ideal but the measure of true love between a man and a woman: a love that is total, faithful, and fruitful.

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Dear grandparents and elderly people, I recommend that you watch over your loved ones with wisdom and compassion, and with the humility and patience that comes with age.

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We are incarnate in time and history since God chose the human condition and the language of humanity.

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When we ask the Spirit to enlighten our minds, to multiply our languages, to awaken our senses, to instil love, to strengthen our bodies, and to grant us peace, we become open to God's Kingdom. This is, according to the Gospel, the meaning of conversion. It is a 'turning toward' the Kingdom already close at hand.

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God is not solitary. God, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is a 'with' in himself, and God with us.

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The road ahead: Where there is the Spirit, there is movement, a journey to be made. We are a people on the move.

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In a divided and troubled world, the Holy Spirit teaches us to walk together in unity. The Earth will rest, justice will prevail, the poor will rejoice and peace will return, once we no longer act as predators but as pilgrims.

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The Spirit inspires the contemplative dimension of life that rejects self-assertion, complaining, rivalry, and the temptation to control consciences and resources.

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Like a mighty wind that overtakes us, like a crash that startles us, like a fire that illuminates us, the gift of the Holy Spirit descends upon us (cf. Acts 2:1-11)

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The Holy Spirit overcomes the apostles fear, shatters their inner chains, heals their wounds, anoints them with strength, and grants them the courage to go out to all and to proclaim God's mighty works.

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The Holy Spirit bestows understanding. The Spirit overcomes the 'breach' that began in Babel, the confusion of mind and heart that sets us one against the other. The Spirit opens borders...

The Spirit opens borders, first of all, in our hearts. He is the gift that opens our lives to love. His presence breaks down our hardness of heart, our narrowness of mind, our selfishness, the fears that enchain us, and the narcissism that makes us think only of ourselves.

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In a world of burgeoning 'social' media, we risk being ever more alone. Constantly connected, yet incapable of 'networking.' Always immersed in a crowd, yet confused and solitary travellers.

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The Spirit opens our interior borders, so that our lives can become places of welcome and refreshment.

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Where there is love, there is no room for prejudice, for 'security' zones separating us from our neighbours, for the exclusionary mindset.

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Moments of anxiety, of loneliness – so many people who suffer from different experiences of depression or sadness, they can discover that the love of God is truly healing, that it brings hope, and that actually, coming together as friends, as brothers and sisters, in community, in a parish, in an experience of living our faith together, we can find that the Lord's grace, that the love of God can truly heal us, can give us the strength that we need, can be the source of that hope that we all need in our lives.

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‘Hope does not disappoint.’ (Romans 5:5)

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This dynamism of God’s inner life gives birth to life. We were created by a God who finds joy in giving existence to his creatures, who ‘delights’ in our world.

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Those who live in extreme conditions cry out to make their voices heard and often find no ears willing to hear their plea. This imbalance generates situations of persistent injustice, which readily lead to violence and to the tragedy of war.

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Belief in God, with the positive values that derive from it, is an immense source of goodness and truth for the lives of individuals and communities.

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Artificial intelligence will be of great help to society, provided that its employment does not undermine the identity and dignity of the human person and his or her fundamental freedoms. In particular, it must not be forgotten that artificial intelligence functions as a tool for the good of human beings, not to diminish them, not to replace them.

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Our personal life has greater value than any algorithm, and social relationships require spaces for development that far transcend the limited patterns that any soulless machine can prepackage. Let us not forget that, while able to store millions of data points and answer many questions in a matter of seconds, artificial intelligence remains equipped with a ‘static memory’ that is in no way comparable to that of human beings. Our memory, on the other hand, is creative, dynamic, generative, capable of uniting past, present, and future in a lively and fruitful search for meaning, with all the ethical and existential implications that this entails.

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Jesus’s compassion for the suffering shows us the loving closeness of God, who comes into our world to save us. Where God reigns, we are set free from all evil. Yet even for those who accept the Good News brought by Jesus, the hour of trial comes.

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For where the Lord is present, we find all that we need to give strength and meaning to our lives.

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To descend into the heart can frighten us at times, because inside it there are also wounds. Do not be afraid to take care of it, to let yourselves be helped, because it is precisely from those wounds that the capacity to be close to those who suffer will be born.

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Crises, limitations, frailties are not to be hidden; they are occasions for grace and paschal experience.

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If we are truly close to those who suffer, the Holy Spirit can revive in their hearts even a flame that has all but died out.

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