



Statement of Most Reverend Daniel H. Mueggenborg on the Death of Pope Francis

RENO (April 21, 2025) – The death of Pope Francis is a loss not only for the Catholic Church, but for the entire world. He was a prophetic voice of compassion, mercy, forgiveness, love and peace for people of all faiths and his message will live on as a valued legacy for all humanity. His personal witness of simplicity and evangelical proclamation of the faith are an enduring witness for all who follow Jesus.

Pope Francis' personal background prepared him to be a leader according to the heart of Christ the Good Shepherd. He knew the value of hard work, he studied the empirical sciences, he served the poor, he fought corruption, he stood up for what is right and just, and he spoke courageously when others remained silent. He was truly a man for our times and a force for good in both the Church and the world.

Bishop Daniel H. Mueggenborg of the Diocese of Reno expressed his deep personal sadness at hearing of the death of Pope Francis. He recalled the various experiences he had meeting the Pope and brief visit with him. The occasion he remembered most was when he gave Pope Francis an original copy of Jesuit breviary (prayer book) printed in the very early 1600's. The Pope was delighted to receive this spiritual artifact of his own Jesuit religious order. Bishop Mueggenborg stated his personal gratitude to Pope Francis for naming him to the episcopacy (Order of Bishops) in 2017 and for appointing him as Bishop of Reno in 2021.

Most of all, Bishop Mueggenborg communicated his admiration for Pope Francis and his personal witness of faith:

"Pope Francis chose the image of Christ the Good Shepherd for his pectoral cross. That image appropriately captures how he understood and carried out his role as the Chief Shepherd of the Church, caring for Christ's flock. He was a living witness of what faithful, humble, selfless, sacrificial service looks like. He will be remembered for his relentless efforts to bring justice, mercy and peace to the world. His heroic defense of the vulnerable dignified the voiceless and gave courage to the persecuted. The world has lost a truly great man."

Bishop Mueggenborg asks all Catholics and people of good will to pray for the peaceful repose of Pope Francis' soul. Catholics pray for the deceased as an expression of our faith in God's mercy and the Easter mystery of the Risen Christ. He also asks that we pray for the Church and for the world – that the legacy of Pope Francis may continue to guide our hearts and minds to pursue the ways of peace, life, charity, and compassion.

More specific details of local events, including a Memorial Mass in memory of Pope Francis, will be announced as they are confirmed.