

# POPE LEO XIV IS NOT FRANCIS II

[Bill Donohue](#)

Lots of people are wondering whether Pope Leo XIV is a reformer in the same vein as Pope Francis, or more of a traditionalist like Francis' two predecessors. It depends on the issue, but to those who think he is a clone of Francis, they are wrong. Importantly, he is not an ideologue.

It is striking to see some celebrating what they claim is a "woke" pope, while others are bemoaning that he is one. Neither is right. Beware: All the alarms going off are false.

An article published on Alternet is cheering "Our New Woke Pope." Why? Because he criticized Vice President J.D. Vance for saying love should begin with loving your family, then others.

Then Cardinal Robert Prevost, an Augustinian priest, said on X that "J.D. Vance is wrong: Jesus doesn't ask us to rank our love for others."

It is absurd to conclude from this that the new pontiff is a "woke" pope. Vance was saying love must be set in proper order, and many Catholic theologians agree. No matter, theological disputes are common in all religious circles, but standing alone they do not make anyone "woke." This is simply a childish way to politicize matters.

Then we have far-right commentator Laura Loomer. She is branding our new pope "woke" and a "Marxist." She is badly educated.

To show how crazy those on the extreme left and right are, consider what *The Nation* is saying. It is a left-wing

publication that championed Stalin, the genocidal maniac. They are raising the flag for Pope Leo XIV because they see in him what Pope Leo XIII stood for during his pontificate.

*The Nation* is right to say our new pope identifies with Leo XIII, but they are wrong to say that the late nineteenth and early twentieth century pope was a social justice warrior in the left-wing tradition. They are heralding him for his “sharp critiques of capitalism.” Maybe if they actually read the 1891 encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*, they wouldn’t sound so silly.

Pope Leo XIII wrote this encyclical eight years after Marx’s death in 1883. He foresaw the horrors that Marx’s ideology would deliver. He said that “ideal equality about which they entertain pleasant dreams would be in reality the leveling down of all to a like condition of misery and degradation.” He also made the case for private property, which is hardly an expression of socialism.

Orthodox Catholics will be happy to learn that Pope Leo XIV is strongly pro-life. He is opposed to abortion, euthanasia and assisted suicide. He is also pro-marriage and the family, properly understood.

He has criticized in no uncertain terms the “homosexual lifestyle” and “alternative families comprised of same-sex partners and their adopted children.” This is great news for practicing Catholics—the ones in the pews who actually pay the bills—but not for dissidents. He has also condemned gender ideology being taught in the schools of Peru. “The promotion of gender ideology is confusing, because it seeks to create genders that don’t exist.” As such, he opposes the exploitation of sexually confused young people.

On immigration, Leo is much more in the liberal camp. He is opposed to the Trump policies and has even criticized the president of El Salvador for his crackdown on illegal immigration. How the heads of state are supposed to deal with

those who are crashing their borders, causing misery for its citizens, is something he may have to address.

Is Pope Leo XIV a Republican, a Democrat or an independent? He's a Republican. A registered Republican in Illinois, he pulled the GOP lever in the 2012, 2014 and 2016 elections. But apparently he did not vote in the 2016 general election and chose to vote by absentee ballot in 2024. It appears he is more of a Bush Republican than a Trump Republican. But he is certainly not a "woke" or "Marxist" activist.

If some progressives who wanted Francis II are not expressing dismay in public, don't be fooled. It is because they want to have entrée with the new pope. The Left exists for one thing—power—and they are masters at deceiving people.

It looks like practicing Catholics will have in Pope Leo XIV someone they can rally around.