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**MESSAGE OF POPE LEO XIV
ON THE OCCASION OF THE INSTALLATION OF THE
ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY**

[**Multimedia**]

*To The Most Reverend and Right Honourable
Dame Sarah Mullally
Archbishop of Canterbury*

*"Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from
Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, in truth and love." (2 Jn 1:3)*

With this assurance of God's abiding presence, I send prayerful greetings to Your Grace on the occasion of your Installation as Archbishop of Canterbury.

I know that the office for which you have been chosen is a weighty one, with responsibilities not only in the Diocese of Canterbury, but throughout the Church of England as well as the Anglican Communion as a whole. Moreover, you are commencing these duties at a challenging moment in the history of the Anglican family. In asking the Lord to strengthen you with the gift of wisdom, I pray that you may be guided by the Holy Spirit in serving your communities, and draw inspiration from the example of Mary, the Mother of God.

Sixty years ago, during their historic encounter in Rome, our predecessors of happy memory, [Saint Paul VI](#) and Archbishop Michael Ramsey, committed Catholics and Anglicans to “a new stage in the development of fraternal relations, based upon Christian charity” ([Joint Declaration](#), 24 March 1966). That fresh chapter of respectful openness has borne much fruit over the past six decades and continues to this day.

On that same occasion, [Pope Paul](#) and Archbishop Ramsey also agreed to initiate a theological dialogue. Indeed, the Anglican–Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) has contributed enormously to a growth in mutual understanding since its creation. The rewards of this valuable work have set us free to witness together more effectively (cf. International Anglican–Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission, [Growing Together in Unity and Mission](#), 93). This is especially vital given the manifold challenges facing our human family today. I am grateful, therefore, that this important dialogue continues.

At the same time, we also know that the ecumenical journey has not always been smooth. Despite much progress, our immediate predecessors, [Pope Francis](#) and Archbishop Justin Welby, acknowledged frankly that “new circumstances have presented new disagreements among us.” Nevertheless, we have continued to walk together, because differences “cannot prevent us from recognizing one another as brothers and sisters in Christ by reason of our common baptism” ([Joint Declaration](#), 5 October 2016). For my part, I firmly believe that we need to continue to dialogue in truth and love, for it is only in truth and love that we come to know together the grace, mercy and peace of God (cf. *2 Jn* 1:3), and thus can offer these precious gifts to the world.

What is more, the unity which Christians seek is never an end in itself, but is directed towards the proclamation of Christ, in order that, as the Lord Jesus himself prayed, “the world may believe” (*Jn* 17:21). In addressing the Primate of the Anglican Communion in 2024, [Pope Francis](#) declared that “it would be a scandal if, due to our divisions, we did not fulfil our common vocation to make Christ known” ([Address to Primate of the Anglican Communion](#), 2 May 2024). Dear sister, I willingly make these words my own, for it is through the witness of a reconciled, fraternal and united Christian community that the proclamation of the Gospel will resound most clearly (cf. [Message for the 2026 World Mission Day](#), 2).

With these fraternal sentiments, I invoke upon you the blessings of Almighty God as you take up your high responsibilities. May the Holy Spirit come down upon you and make you fruitful in the Lord’s service.

From the Vatican, 20 March 2026
Memorial of Saint Cuthbert, Bishop

LEO PP. XIV

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