

Catholic Trends/Summer-2025 (#2)

Where does Pope Leo XIV stand on hot-button issues? While Pope Leo XIV will not be a clone of the papacy of Francis, he will set his own course. But, as his papacy gradually unfolds, it's important to know exactly what he has said on certain issues.

ABORTION

- As a student at Villanova in the 1970s, he helped found a pro-life group on campus (cf. *The College Fix*).
- In an address to the Synod of Bishops in 2012 he said, “Western mass media is extraordinarily effective in fostering within the general public enormous sympathy for beliefs and practices that are at odds with the gospel, for example abortion, homosexual lifestyle, euthanasia” *Newsweek*)
- Let’s defend human life at all times! (2015 tweet in support of the March for Life in Chiclayo, Peru (*Newsweek*))
- “We cannot build a just society if we discard the weakest—whether the child in the womb or the elderly in their frailty—for they are both gifts from God.” (2019 homily, *Newsweek*)
- “*The Church must walk with all people, especially the most vulnerable, ensuring their dignity is upheld from the womb to the end of life, as this is the heart of Christ’s mission*” (2023 address to clergy in Peru; *Newsweek*)

AI

- “The Church offers to everyone the treasury of her social teaching in response to another industrial revolution and to developments in the field of artificial intelligence that pose new challenges for the defense of human dignity, justice and labor.” (May 10, 2025, address to the College of Cardinals, Vatican)

ASSISTED SUICIDE

- On Twitter, he shared an article by Catholic News Agency condemning Canada for implementing assisted suicide (2016 Twitter, *Newsweek*)

GENDER IDEOLOGY

- The promotion of gender ideology is confusing, because it seeks to create genders that don’t exist.” (2016 to local media in Peru, *National Catholic Register*)

IMMIGRATION

On X, he shared an article from *National Catholic Reporter* critical of Vice President Vance’s stance on immigration (February 3, 2025 X post, @drprevost).

Soon after on X, he shared an article from *America Magazine* critical of V.P. Vance's stance on immigration (February 13, 2025 X post, @drprevost)

- In an interview with the media, his older brother John Prevost has indicated that he is “not happy with what’s going on with immigration” policy in the United States. (May 9, 2025, *The Guardian*).

LGBT

- He criticized the media for portraying “alternative families composed of same-sex partners and their adopted children in a positive light” (2012 address to the Synod of Bishops, *Newsweek*)

- Pope Francis has made it very clear that he doesn’t want people to be excluded simply on the basis of choices that they make whether it be lifestyle, work, way to dress, or whatever. Doctrine hasn’t changed, and people haven’t said yet, you know, we’re looking for that kind of change. But we are looking to be more welcoming and more open, and to say all people are welcome in the church” (2023 interview with Catholic News Service, *National Catholic Register*)

- He has been ambiguous on *Fiducia supplicans*. However, after the African bishops raised concerns about providing blessings to same-sex couples, he suggested a compromise to allow the bishops to opt out. (2024 CBCPNews).

ORDAINING WOMEN

- When asked about the possibility of ordaining women, he noted that “the apostolic tradition is something that has been spelled out very clearly” (2023, Synod on Synodality, *National Catholic Register*)

- “Something that needs to be said also is that ordaining women...and ‘clericalizing women’ doesn’t necessarily solve a problem, it might make a new problem,” (2023, Synod on Synodality, *National Catholic Register*)

German bishops dispute there are two sexes. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* is very clear that “In creating men ‘male and female,’ God gives man and woman an equal personal dignity.” Pope Francis, not only agreed with this fundamental Catholic tenet, he said that those who deny there are only two sexes, male and female, are fostering a false anthropology.

Evidently and which doesn’t come as too much of a surprise, the German bishops, as they tend to do, disagree. Indeed, they also disagree with Pope Francis’ proclamation on gender ideology, which he called “demonic.”

In a handout prepared by the German Bishops Conference that was recently published, the bishops made it very clear their vision of humanity differs from that

of the Church writ large. The title of their document sends a clear signal: “Blessings for Couples Who Love Each Other.”

“Couples who love each other” obviously applies to same-sex couples. The handout speaks to extending blessings to “couples in all the diversity of sexual orientations and gender identities that are part of our society.” The document suggests that there are more than two gender identities. If so, what are they?

In an attempt to be “relevant” the German Bishops Conference has diluted traditional Catholic teaching, which may have contributed to the abysmal attendance in Mass participation. In a vain attempt to be “inclusive”, the German bishops have alienated orthodox Catholics, making *them* feel excluded. In contrast, the African Catholic vision of sexuality that emphasizes fidelity to the Church’s teachings, Catholic attendance is robust and is surging, which is due in no small part to its embrace of Catholic orthodoxy.

German bishops who are prepared to believe that there are a multiplicity of sexual orientations and gender identities are not just rejecting the teachings of the Catholic Church, they are rejecting what science affirms. Moreover, they are driving the faithful to exit the Catholic Church.

Pam Bondi targets medical profession. U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi is zeroing in on the medical profession’s role in providing services to sexually confused minors. She will focus on “the medical community’s fraud and exploitation of parents and children who have fallen prey to radical gender ideology.” She said that the DOJ will not sit back and allow doctors who are ‘motivated by ideology, profits, or both to exploit and mutilate our children.’

Bondi is not just making a “talking point,” but is putting “medical practitioners, hospitals, and clinics on notice” that they will be held accountable for engaging in sex-reassignment surgeries of children.

What motivated Bondi to act were reports that the Biden-Harris administration aided and abetted the suffering of children by the medical profession, all in the name of providing “gender affirming care.” There is nothing noble about sexual reconstructing children. It is a monstrous act done for politics and profit.

The American Medical Association (AMA) has enabled this turn of events. Science states the obvious that sex is binary, yet they pretend that it is not. It has gone so far that it opposes designating sex on birth certificates as male or female, as if there is some legitimate third choice.

Several well-known medical schools—e.g., Harvard Medical School which houses Mass General, Boston Children’s Hospital, and Stanford Medicine—specialize in gender-affirming care. Harvard is so specialized that it even offers “vocal feminization and masculinization” services. One wonders that if there is no such thing as a biological male or female, that it’s only a matter of preference, then why are they tinkering with kids’ vocal cords to make them sound like a man and a woman?

“Gender-affirming medical practices” is not a value neutral domain but speaks to the nature of sexual identity. Some medical practitioners, such as Harvard Medical School, are preying upon the individuals who suffer from basic moral confusion. Such medical (mal) practice is not only injurious to health, but goes against basic science. As a society, we’re facing a mental health emergency and Bondi seems to get the urgency of the situation.

--revised version taken from the *Catalyst* (June 2025)
Journal of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights.

Pope Leo XIV stresses character formation. Just one week into his pontificate, the Holy Father spoke to Catholic educators, making plain that the whole child should be educated. He implored them to “dedicate yourselves to the formation of the young with enthusiasm, fidelity and spirit of sacrifice.

He specifically spoke to the issue of values. “What, in the world of youth today, are the most urgent challenges to be faced?’ What values are to be promoted?”

From a Catholic perspective, the values that young people adopt must be grounded in obligation to others. This is difficult these days given the cultural emphasis on self-absorption. Indeed, focusing “on the other” and sharing your life with others are radical ideas in our society.

The Holy Father nicely summarizes the challenges that await young people. “Think of the isolation caused by rampant relational models increasingly marked by superficiality, individualism and emotional instability; the spread of patterns of thought weakened by relativism; and the prevalence of rhythms and lifestyles in which there is not enough room for listening, reflection and dialogue, at school, in the family, and sometimes among peers themselves, with consequential loneliness.” Pope Leo’s reflection comes at a time when parents are struggling with the allure that technology has for their children. Screen addiction is isolating, resulting in loneliness, which many parents are afraid they’re losing their kids to technology.

—The *Catalyst* (July/August 2025)

