



St. Ambrose
North Road
Leigh Woods
Bristol
BS8 3PW

E: bishop@cliftondiocese.com
T: 0117 973 3072

Thursday 15th October 2026

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Like so many of you, I was deeply saddened to hear the news of Pope Leo XIV's recent diagnosis and surgery. At a time when the Holy Father carries such great responsibility for the life and mission of the Church, I know that he will be very much in our thoughts and prayers.

I have written personally to Pope Leo on behalf of the whole Diocese of Clifton, assuring him of our affection, our closeness to him at this difficult time, and our heartfelt prayers for his full and lasting recovery.

Earlier this summer, I experienced some problems with my own health which required surgery and a period of recovery. One of the things that sustained me most during that time was knowing how many people were praying for me. I remain enormously grateful for that kindness. There is something deeply reassuring about knowing that, especially when we feel vulnerable, we are being held in the prayers of others. I hope that we can now offer that same gift to our Holy Father.

I would be grateful if every parish and community in the Diocese could remember Pope Leo in prayer, particularly at Mass over the coming days. I also encourage our families, schools and religious communities to join in praying for his recovery. I offer the following simple prayer, which you may wish to use in your parishes and homes.

Prayer for Pope Leo XIV

Loving and merciful Father,

We entrust to your tender care our Holy Father, Pope Leo.

Be close to him in his illness, strengthen him in his recovery and fill his heart with your peace.

Bless those who care for him, restore him to full and lasting health, and renew his strength for the ministry to which you have called him.

May he always know the love and prayers of your people throughout the world.

Through the intercession of Mary, Mother of the Church, keep him safe in your loving care.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

One of the beautiful things about belonging to the Church is that we are united across every distance by our faith in Christ and our care for one another. Our Holy Father has asked us to pray for him, and this is a particularly important moment for us to respond to that request with generosity and love.

May the Lord bless Pope Leo, restore his strength and grant him many more years of joyful and fruitful service to the Church.

With my prayers and every blessing,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Bosco MacDonald". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. To the left of the first letter "B" is a small, simple cross symbol.

Rt. Revd. Bosco MacDonald
Bishop of Clifton