



Presbytery of Redstone



communicate the Word ... carry on the work ... change the world ... together

Statement on the Death of Pope Francis Lon Weaver – Interim Executive Presbyter

How sad it was to hear the morning news that Pope Francis had died. Yet, how powerful it was that he had left this realm on the day after Easter! Now, the College of Cardinals will begin the process of electing the new leader of Roman Catholic Christians. With hope and deep discernment, they may choose one who will be able to succeed a leader who had a profound impact on people in and outside of Catholicism.

By choosing Francis of Assisi as his papal name, Pope Francis showed his care for all of reality, serving Christ by honoring all living things: thus, the environment (what Christians call creation) was important to him, and to exploit it without limits defaced it as “creation.” Francis sought humility over extravagance: he lived in a Vatican hotel rather than the papal palace. Without apology, he was a political figure: on some occasions, this set him against political leaders around the world. As an immigrant himself, he had a heart for those whose life circumstances led them to migrate from one nation to another. This led him to confront European leaders who were hesitant to respond to the needs of those fleeing Syria amidst its civil war, beginning in 2011. It also led him to reject President Trump’s immigration and deportation policies, advocating for bridges in place of walls. He sought to imitate the model of Christ: seeking those on the fringes of society, protecting the vulnerable from the powerholders. He understood Lord Acton’s conclusion that “power tends to corrupt, and absolute power tends to corrupt absolutely,” pointing to the corrupting force of wealth in the face of the needs of the poor.

Yet, Pope Francis was very human. He couldn’t move the Roman Catholic Church to receive women into leadership roles equal to men, especially through ordination. He had begun to address the complexities of human sexuality, but these remained a bit blurry. While he moved his church to face its past failures to protect the vulnerable from predatory leaders, further work there remains.

Despite these shortfalls, at his best, Pope Francis saw the church as a “field hospital after battle, healing the wounds of the faithful and going out to find those who have been hurt, excluded or fallen away.” This led him to choose generous mercy over against “pure” doctrine. In this, his labors were driven by the vision of Christ, expressed in Matthew’s gospel:

“Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30).

In that, Francis has offered a powerful example for us. May that continue to be the

Spirit that guides us in lives following the risen Christ!

Presbytery of Redstone | 724.837.6737
1004 Mt.Pleasant Road Greensburg, PA 15601

www.redstonepresbytery.org



Presbytery of Redstone | 1004 Mt. Pleasant Road | Greensburg, PA 15601 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!