

# *Feast Day of Pope St. Leo the Great*

*Doctor of the Unity of the Church*

*November 10*



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*So cherished was St. Leo as a majestic man in pursuit of truth and unity, filled with love and concern for individual souls, that the clergy and people of Rome thought of no one else but St. Leo as their bishop. Thus they sent word to St. Leo, a deacon at the time, asking that he return to Rome. The Holy Spirit was working throughout all the faithful: the people of God's Church had chosen St. Leo as Pope. He was elected unanimously and raised to Vicar of Christ on September 29, 440 A.D. His reign as earthly head of the Catholic Church would last twenty-one years.*

*Pope St. Leo the Great labored constantly to protect the integrity of the Faith; he worked with zeal to combat Pelagianism (the heretical doctrine of Pelagius which denied Original Sin); he took strenuous action against the Manicheans; waged war against Nestorianism and Eutychianism; and he wrote in order to correct the errors of Priscillianism in Spain. All of this he did because he knew that the most loving gift which the faithful could receive was the true teaching handed down from Jesus Christ through the Apostles, within the heart of the Church.*

*Further, he strenuously defended the unity of the Catholic Church, and, with constancy, strove to teach all men the doctrines of our Lord in order to lead souls to the fullness of salvation. One could sum up Pope Leo the Great's pontificate as a continuous period of tireless*

effort directed at upholding the unity of the Church, that pillar and foundation of truth (1 Tim 3:15) whose rays of light transmit the Gospel of Christ to all nations. Certainly these wonderful elements of St. Leo's life ought to be enough, yet there is much more.

On two occasions, St. Leo I confronted the leaders of invasions in order to quell imminent attacks. First, in 452, at the request of the Emperor Valentinian and the Roman Senate, he went out with great courage to face Attila the Hun, the notorious leader of the Hunnic Empire. Accompanied by Senators Avienus and Trigetius, St. Leo managed to convince the terrible Attila to turn back. Legend has it that Attila, on looking above St. Leo, saw in a vision that Sts. Peter and Paul would support the Pope's wishes, which struck him with fear. Second, merely three years later in 455, St. Leo faced Genseric the Vandal, who had captured the city of Rome. Due to St. Leo's intervention, though the Vandals plundered for two weeks, they did not set the city ablaze nor kill; the large churches, too, were left untouched.

Ninety-six of Leo's sermons have been preserved which provide wonderful example of his clearness of dictation, lofty style, and sagacity. In Sermon 95, St. Leo tells us that, during the Sermon on the Mount, when our Lord Jesus Christ said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit" (Mt. 5:3), He taught "that the kingdom of heaven is to be given to those who are distinguished by their humility of soul rather than by their lack of worldly goods."

Pope St. Leo the Great certainly possessed a deep humility; with his whole heart he submitted to the Bride of Christ, labored to lead others into a profound commitment to the See of Peter, and strove to maintain the unity of the Church God willed should exist. Hence, St. Leo modeled his life after the sixth beatitude, which proclaims, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Mt. 5:8).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church explains that to be "'Pure in heart' refers to those who have attuned their intellects and wills to the demands of God's holiness, chiefly in three areas: charity; chastity or sexual rectitude; love of truth and orthodoxy of faith. There is a connection between purity of heart of body, and of faith" (# 2518). St. Leo exemplifies "love of truth and orthodoxy of faith". Such virtues were his lifeblood.

Also, we have 143 letters of great importance to Church history written from his hand. A famous letter known as "The Tome", number 28 in the series, was written to St. Flavian, Bishop of Constantinople, referring to the condemned opinions of Eutyches. The "Tome" was read before more than 500 bishops assembled at the Council of Chalcedon on October 10, 452. During the fifth and sixth sessions of this same council, the official definition of the doctrine of Christ's two natures and Person was approved, largely based on St. Leo's "Tome".

In section I of the "Tome", Pope Saint Leo the Great notes that Eutyches, through presumption and ignorance, has been driven into error. With wonderful boldness, St. Leo clearly proclaims the dangers of self-deception that result from refusing to assent to the truth and accept the council of those who are more learned and wise: "what [is] more iniquitous than to hold blasphemous opinions, and not to give way to those who are wiser and more learned than ourself. Now into this unwisdom fall they who, finding themselves hindered from knowing the truth by some obscurity, have recourse not to the prophets' utterances, not to the Apostles' letters, nor to the injunctions of the Gospel but to their own selves: and thus they stand out as masters of error because they were never disciples of truth."

Section III and IV of the "Tome" provide us with an accurate yet poetic description of the two natures, the divine and the human, in the one Person of Christ: "Without detriment therefore to the properties of either nature and substance which then came together in one person, majesty took on humility, strength weakness, eternity mortality: and for the paying off of the debt belonging to our condition inviolable nature was united with possible nature, so that, as suited the needs of our case, one and the same Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, could both die with the one and not die with the other. . . . He took the form of a slave without stain of sin, increasing the human and not diminishing the divine: because that emptying of Himself whereby the Invisible made Himself visible and, Creator and Lord of all things though He be, wished to be a mortal, was the bending down of pity, not the failing of power. . . . Accordingly He who while remaining in the form of God made man, was also made man in the form of a slave. For both natures retain their own proper character without loss: and as the form of God did not do away with the form of a slave, so the form of a slave did not impair the form of God. . . . And as the Word does not cease to be on an equality with His Father's glory, so the flesh does not forego the nature of our race. For it must again and again be repeated that one and the same is truly Son of God and truly son of man. God in that 'in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God'" (John 1:1).

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In Sermon 3, Pope St. Leo the Great notes the perpetual unity of faith found in Christ's Catholic Church "For the solidity of that faith which was praised in the chief of the Apostles is perpetual: and as that remains which Peter believed in Christ, so that remains which Christ instituted in Peter."

Nearly sixteen centuries ago, Pope St. Leo the Great's voice resounded from Rome, upholding the unity of the Catholic Church, urging obedience to the See of Peter; in that voice, heresies were combated, warnings against dissent were promulgated, and, all the while, the love of truth St. Leo held deep within his heart radiated outward. Those times were numerous when, with hidden tears of love beyond the depths, St. Leo strived to instill a love of Sacred Tradition among the faithful. He was, no doubt, a true guardian of the Faith. In no small way, he called the community of Christ's Church, the Catholic faithful, to the wonders and beauty of the Truth. In such a call, pride gives way to humility, wisdom overtakes stubbornness, and, through obedience to the fullness of truth found in the Catholic Church, the soul is set free to sail upon the heights.

We can still hear, within our hearts, St. Leo's sermons of loving admonishment, charitable correction, and heartfelt concern. His weighty words silently echo among the walls of the world's oldest living institution; the truth he so carefully guarded still shines before the nations; and, with unspeakable wonder, faithful Catholics the world over still cherish this magnificent man; this "greatest among the great".

"Remember, Christian, the surpassing worth of the wisdom that is yours. Bear in mind the kind of school in which you are to learn your skills, the rewards to which you are called. Mercy itself wishes you to be merciful, righteousness itself wishes you to be righteous, so that the Creator may shine forth in his creature, and the image of God be reflected in the mirror of

the human heart as it imitates his qualities. The faith of those who live their faith is a serene faith. What you long for will be given you; what you love will be yours for ever" - Pope Saint Leo the Great; Doctor of the Unity of the Church.

## *From the Book of Heaven*

**V23 – 10.16.27** - "My Daughter, My Divine Will Possesses the **Unity**, and one who Lives in It Lives in this **Unity**. And do you Know what **Unity** Means? It Means One—a One that can Embrace Everything and Everyone, and can Give Everything, because it Encloses Everything. My Divine Will Possesses the **Unity** of Love and of All Loves **United** Together; It Possesses the **Unity** of Sanctity and Encloses All Sanctities; It Possesses the **Unity** of Beauty and Encloses within Itself Everything Beautiful that is Possible and Imaginable. In sum, It Encloses the **Unity** of Light, of Power, of Goodness, of Wisdom.

True and Perfect **Unity**, while Being One, Must Possess Everything, and this Everything Must be All of an Equal Strength, All Immense and Infinite, Eternal, without Beginning and without End. Therefore, one who Lives in It Lives within the Immense and Gigantic Waves It Possesses, in Such a Way that the soul Feels the Empire of the One Strength of Light, of Sanctity, of Love, etc. So, in this One Strength, Everything is Light for her, Everything changes into Sanctity, into Love, into Power, and All things Bring her the Knowledge of the Wisdom of this **Unity**. Therefore, to Live in It is the greatest Miracle and the Perfect Carrying Out of the Divine Life in the creature. The Word **Unity** Means Everything, and the soul Takes Everything by Living in It."

After this, I Continued Making my Round in the Acts of the Divine Fiat, and as I arrived at the Seas of the Celestial Mama, that She had Formed in the **Unity** of It, I thought to myself: "My Sovereign Mama did not have the interest of Impetrating the Kingdom of the Divine Will, because, if She had had it, in this **Unity** in which She Lived, just as She Obtained the Kingdom of Redemption She would have Obtained that of the Divine Will.

And my Sweet Jesus, moving in my interior, told me: "My Daughter, to all appearances it may seem that the whole Interest of Our Queen Mama was for the Kingdom of Redemption; but it is Not True—that was the External Part, but the Interior was All for the Kingdom of My Divine Will. In fact, She, Who Knew All the Value of It and the Complete Glory for Her Creator and the Maximum and Complete Good for creatures, could not do without Asking for the Kingdom of the Eternal Fiat."

**FIAT!!!**