

GROUNDBREAKING POPE RESHAPED THE CHURCH

‘A Man of Peace’

Pope Francis went from a modest life in Buenos Aires, where he was born in 1936, to leading the Roman Catholic Church.

2013  
**First Latin American Pope**  
Francis was elected pontiff after Pope Benedict XVI resigned, citing health concerns. Francis tried to move the church away from divisive issues such as abortion and homosexuality, instead focusing on climate change, poverty and migration. His first papal trip was to Lampedusa, an Italian island that had become a beacon for asylum seekers and migrants.

2015  
**Tending the U.S. Flock**  
During a six-day trip to the United States, he became the first pope to address Congress.

2018  
**A Deal With China**  
Francis reached a provisional agreement to end a long power struggle over the right to appoint bishops in the country. The deal also legitimized seven bishops appointed by Beijing, which critics said set a dangerous precedent.

2019  
**A Push to Protect Minors**  
Francis issued the church’s most comprehensive response in decades to the sexual abuse crisis. It obligated church officials worldwide to report cases of sexual abuse, and efforts to cover them up, to their superiors.

2022  
**Apology for ‘Evil’**  
During a visit to Canada, Francis begged for forgiveness from the country’s Indigenous people, and apologized for the church’s role in abusive residential schools.

2023  
**Effort to Include Women**  
Francis for the first time held a meeting of world bishops that included women and lay people as voting members. After the meeting, Francis allowed priests to bless gay couples.



POPE FRANCIS, 1936-2025 The first Latin American pontiff, shown in 2015, died on Monday at 88.

Pushed Inclusion and Advocacy, Not Dogma

By JASON HOROWITZ and JIM YARDLEY

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis, who rose from modest means in Argentina to become the first Jesuit and Latin American pontiff, who clashed bitterly with traditionalists in his push for a more inclusive Roman Catholic Church, and who spoke out tirelessly for migrants, the marginalized and the health of the planet, died on Monday at the Vatican’s Casa Santa Marta. He was 88.

The pope’s death was announced by the Vatican in a statement on X, a day after Francis appeared in his wheelchair to bless the faithful in St. Peter’s Square on Easter Sunday. The Vatican listed the causes of death as a cerebral stroke, followed by a coma and “irreversible cardiocirculatory collapse.”

Throughout his 12-year papacy, Francis was a change agent, having inherited a Vatican in disarray in 2013 after the stunning resignation of his predecessor, Benedict XVI, a standard-bearer of Roman Catholic conservatism.

Francis steadily steered the church in another direction, restocking its leadership with a diverse array of bishops who shared his pastoral, welcoming approach as he sought to open up the church. Many rank-and-file Catholics approved, believing that the church had become inward-looking and distant from ordinary people.

Francis reached out to migrants, the poor and the destitute, to victims of sexual abuse by Catholic clergy members, and to alienated gay Catholics. He traveled to often-forgotten and far-flung countries and sought to improve relations with an antagonistic Chinese government, Muslim clerics and leaders from across the fragmented Christian world.

After some early stumbles, he took strong steps to address a clerical sex abuse crisis that had become an existential threat to

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Shifts Split Faith in U.S., Fueling Right’s Fire

By ELIZABETH DIAS and RUTH GRAHAM

Months into his papacy in 2013, Pope Francis was asked about gay priests, and he responded, “Who am I to judge?” Across the United States, Catholics and non-Catholics alike took a collective gasp.

For years the Roman Catholic Church in the United States had deeply aligned with the religious right in fierce conflicts over issues like abortion, gay marriage and contraception. But Pope Francis wanted a church “with doors always wide open,” as he said in his



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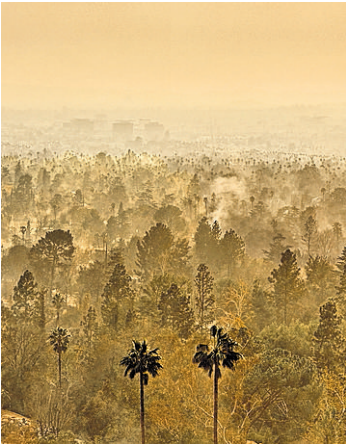
Lighting candles and praying for Francis at Myeongdong Cathedral in Seoul on Monday.

first apostolic exhortation. Words like these made the new pope a revolutionary figure in the United States, in both the Catholic Church and the nation’s politics. He challenged each to shift its moral focus toward issues like poverty, immigration and war, and to confront the realities of income inequality and climate change. Pope Francis offered a progressive, public Catholicism in force, coinciding with the Obama era, and at the beginning of his pontificate, he moved the U.S. church forward from the sex-abuse scandals that roiled his predecessor’s pontificate. He pushed church leaders to be pastors, not doctrinaires, and ele- Continued on Page A12

E.P.A. Poised to Cancel Grants To Study Dangers to Children

By HIROKO TABUCHI

The Trump administration is set to cancel tens of millions of dollars in grants to scientists studying environmental hazards faced by children in rural America, among other health issues, according to internal emails written by senior officials at the Environmental Protection Agency. The planned cancellation of the research grants, which were awarded to scientists outside the agency, comes as President Trump continues to dismantle some of the E.P.A.’s core functions. The grants are designed to address a variety of issues, including improving the health of children in rural America who have been ex-



PHILIP CHEUNG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Research on exposure to wildfire smoke may also be cut.

posed to pesticides from agriculture and other pollution; reducing exposure to wildfire smoke; and preventing “forever chemicals” from contaminating the food supply. An email sent by Dan Coogan, a deputy assistant administrator at the E.P.A., on April 15, and seen by The New York Times, said the agency leadership was directing staff to cancel all pending and active grants across a number of key programs, including Science to Achieve Results, known as STAR. According to the email, the cuts also targeted the People, Prosperity and the Planet program, or P3, which awards small grants to college students to work on environmental solutions. In the latest funding year, students were developing antiviral face masks from plastic waste as well as 100 percent-compostable packaging film. “We have received direction from Leadership to cancel all pending awards and terminate grants for the following programs,” the email from Mr. Coogan began, followed by a list of programs. In response to inquiries on Monday, the E.P.A. said the grants had not been canceled. “As with any change in Administration, the agency is reviewing its awarded grants to ensure each is an appropriate fit for the current administration.” Continued on Page A19

Would \$5,000 Bonuses Spur New Baby Boom?

By CAROLINE KITCHENER

WASHINGTON — The White House has been hearing out a chorus of ideas in recent weeks for persuading Americans to marry and have more children, an early sign that the Trump administration will embrace a new cultural agenda pushed by many of its allies on the right to reverse declining birthrates and push conservative family values. One proposal shared with aides would reserve 30 percent of scholarships for the Fulbright program,

Trump Aides Weighing Rewards for Births

the prestigious, government-backed international fellowship, for applicants who are married or have children. Another would give a \$5,000 cash “baby bonus” to every American mother after delivery. A third calls on the government to fund programs that educate women on their menstrual cycles

— in part so they can better understand when they are ovulating and able to conceive. Those ideas, and others, are emerging from a movement concerned with declining birthrates that has been gaining steam for years and now finally has allies in the U.S. administration, including Vice President JD Vance and Elon Musk. Policy experts and advocates of raising the birthrate have been meeting with White House aides, sometimes handing over written Continued on Page A19



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Ancient City Scarred by War

Fighters in Syria used Palmyra as a base, marring monuments that stood for millennia. Page A4.

INTERNATIONAL A4-16

Deprioritizing Israel’s Hostages

The finance minister, Bezalel Smotrich, said the greater goal was not ensuring their return, but banning Hamas from ruling the Gaza Strip. PAGE A15

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Advertisers Suffer Tariff Chaos

Hundreds of billions of marketing dollars are in flux as companies struggle to pin down supply chains. PAGE B1

China May Bypass U.S. Crops

Beijing is likely to look to Brazil and Argentina for the soybeans it has long bought from American farmers. PAGE B1

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A Miner’s Nightmare

One surprise of a new production of “Floyd Collins” is how far from claustrophobic the cave saga feels. PAGE C1

The Digital Looking Glass

In the British artist Ed Atkins’s world, technology mirrors who we are. Below, “Death Mask II: The Scent.” PAGE C1



NATIONAL A17-25

Ex-Senator’s Wife Convicted

Nadine Menendez, whose husband, Robert Menendez, was convicted last year, was found guilty for her role in a complex bribery conspiracy. PAGE A25

L.G.B.T.Q. Books in Schools

The Supreme Court will decide if parents have a right to pull children from lessons using gay-themed texts. PAGE A18

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A Professional Skeptic

Joe Nickell offered rational explanations for hundreds of mysteries, like the Loch Ness monster. He was 80.

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Better Insight Into Estrogen

A growing understanding of how “reproductive” hormones sculpt the brain could transform the management of neurological conditions. PAGE D1

Springtime On Auris-7c

An artist imagines the flora of distant, nonexistent worlds. At right, Lucens borealis from a planet composed of electrically charged hot ice. PAGE D8



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A Pair of 7-Foot Forces

The Thunder look to Chet Holmgren and Isaiah Hartenstein to provide a lift in the N.B.A. playoffs. PAGE B6

Blazing Boston Marathon

John Korir joined his brother as a race winner, and Sharon Lokedi shattered the women’s course record. PAGE B9

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Yarimar Bonilla

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