

The Quiet Journey From Father Bob to Pope Leo

A Worldly but Humble
Favorite of Francis

This article is by Jason Horowitz, Julie Bosman, Elizabeth Dias, Ruth Graham, Simon Romero and Mitra Taj.

VATICAN CITY — Father Robert Prevost told the Peruvian soldiers to back off.

It was the mid-1990s, and the troops, armed to the teeth, had stopped and boarded a minibus carrying the American priest and a group of young Peruvian seminarians. The soldiers tried to forcibly recruit the men.

Citing a law that exempted clerics from military service, Father Prevost told the soldiers, “No, these young men are going to be priests, they cannot go to the barracks,” said the Rev. Ramiro Castillo, one of the seminarians in the van. “When he had to speak, he spoke.”

After years of internal violence, border tensions and political turmoil, Peru, under its authoritarian president, wanted more military muscle. In those days, Father Prevost and the seminarians traveled the country, re-enacting scenes, sometimes in costume as an insurgent or a soldier, to prompt conversations and help heal the country scarred by the bitter conflicts.

These were dramatizations of dramatic times that Father Prevost had lived through as a missionary who found his voice, in Peru. Now, as he takes over an often divided Roman Catholic Church and the most prominent pulpit on earth, his voice will be heard globally when authoritarianism is on the rise, technological leaps are disrupting society, and the most vulnerable are being threatened by conflicts, economic inequality and climate change.

A man with a foot in two continents and multiple languages, Pope Leo XIV brings to bear a résumé that got him the job, full of deep religious education, frontline pastoral work, global order management and top Vatican governance experience. He also had a powerful booster in Pope Francis, who, at the end of his life, urgently pushed the American’s career forward.

Throughout, Bob, as his Ameri-



VIA JOHN JOSEPH PREVOST

CHICAGO BOYHOOD Robert Prevost, left, with his mother, Mildred, and brothers Louis, center, and John. A neighbor once predicted that Robert would become pope.

can friends still call him, or Robert, as his Spanish and Italian ones do, has remained consistently low-key, a gray man in a world of outsized personalities cloaked in sumptuous scarlet cassocks, an earnest admin of the apostles. His spiritual training has taught him to step back and make more room for others, while putting the faith

above all else.

He has recognized that he will have to leave more of himself behind as he takes on the burden of leading the world’s 1.4 billion Catholics.

On Tuesday, Leo sneaked into the headquarters of his Augustinian order right off St. Peter’s Square. Over carbonara pasta, he

listened as his friends, choked up, told him the church’s gain had created a void in their chapel and dining hall.

“I see one has to give up many things,” he said at the lunch, according to the Rev. Alejandro Moral Antón, an old friend in the room.

After he finished, Leo, whose

Continued on Page 12

Professors Face
Student Rancor
Over Use of A.I.

By KASHMIR HILL

In February, Ella Stapleton, then a senior at Northeastern University, was reviewing lecture notes from her organizational behavior class when she noticed something odd. Was that a query to ChatGPT from her professor?

Halfway through the document, which her business professor had made for a lesson on models of leadership, was an instruction to ChatGPT to “expand on all areas. Be more detailed and specific.” It was followed by a list of positive and negative leadership traits, each with a prosaic definition and a bullet-pointed example.

Ms. Stapleton texted a friend in the class.

“Did you see the notes he put on Canvas?” she wrote, referring to the university’s software platform for hosting course materials. “He made it with ChatGPT.”

“OMG Stop,” the classmate responded. “What the hell?”

Ms. Stapleton decided to do some digging. She reviewed her professor’s slide presentations and discovered other telltale signs of A.I.: distorted text, photos of office workers with extraneous body parts and bad misspellings.

She was not happy. Given the school’s cost and reputation, she expected a top-tier education. This course was required for her business minor; its syllabus for-

Continued on Page 16



AUSTIN ANTHONY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Deadly Path of Tornadoes

Extreme storms tore through Kentucky and Missouri, leaving destruction in London, Ky. Page 28.

Corner Where ‘I Can’t Breathe’ Ignited a Movement Confronts Its Own Struggle

By ERNESTO LONDOÑO

MINNEAPOLIS — The intersection of 38th Street East and Chicago Avenue in Minneapolis was forever altered the day a police officer knelt on George Floyd’s neck five years ago, killing him.

The killing led to a national reckoning over police misconduct and racism, and here, it spawned a

site of protest, art, grief and remembrance that feels to some in this community like an open wound.

Wooden sculptures in the shape of raised brown fists mark either end of the street. Arresting murals nearby have been defaced and touched up repeatedly.

Residents and city officials have debated for years what should be done with the site, and

how the man whose killing fueled the Black Lives Matter movement should be memorialized.

The space’s unresolved state in many ways reflects how stuck the country remains on matters of race, justice and reparations.

On this there is little debate: George Floyd Square gave rise to a movement that changed the United States. But what will its legacy and future be?

The Iron Miners Lost Their Jobs
But Kept Their Belief in Tariffs

By TALMON JOSEPH SMITH

HIBBING, Minn. — Until everything came to a halt in mid-March, Jon Bird worked 12-hour shifts, four days a week — shoveling rock, hosing mud and operating enormous iron ore crushers at a mine in northern Minnesota.

The mines in the state’s Iron Range, where Mr. Bird was born and raised — and where his father, grandfather and great-grandfather worked in the pits before him — sit atop a domestic supply funnel. The ore, extracted and crushed, is further processed, shipped, smelted in a blast furnace, transformed into steel, then taken to assembly lines, where it is shaped into appliances and automobiles.

But demand for cars and other big-ticket, metal-filled items slumped in 2024, a rough year for the industry. The steel manufac-

turer Cleveland-Cliffs, which owns the mine where Mr. Bird works, reported a \$483 million loss for the first three months of 2025, which meant jobs were on the line, including his.

When Mr. Bird, 33, found out that he was being laid off, he did not hear it from “Cliffs,” he said. Rather, he learned about it in a breaking news segment on the local television station, WDIO, while with his children on one of his days off. Some 1,200 Cleveland-Cliffs employees were affected, 600 them in Minnesota.

“It’s a hell of a way to find out you’re losing your job,” he said. “It feels like a slap in the face, honestly, from corporate America.”

Yet one thing currently uniting Cleveland-Cliffs and Mr. Bird, a

Continued on Page 21

NATIONAL 14-28

Solar Panels, Guided by Faith

A cluster of evangelical groups in Indiana is pushing for environmental action. Leaders say they’re following the biblical mandate to care for God’s creation. PAGE 14

Comey Interrogated Over Post

The Secret Service questioned James B. Comey, the former F.B.I. director, over a social media picture that administration officials interpreted as a call to assassinate President Trump. PAGE 23

SUNDAY OPINION

John McWhorter

PAGE 6



INTERNATIONAL 4-13

Only 2 Legal Gun Stores

Mexico has strict gun control laws, but it also has a huge flow of illegal weapons from the United States. PAGE 4

Trump and Putin to Talk

The plans were announced hours after a Russian drone strike on a bus in Ukraine killed nine civilians. PAGE 6

SUNDAY STYLES

Stephen A. Smith’s Big Quest

America’s best-known sports-talker is teasing a 2028 run for president. But what he really wants is ubiquitous political influence. PAGE 10

Obsession With an Artist

In a show at the Cleveland Museum of Art, Takashi Murakami is “influenced by the spirit of the moment.” PAGE 1

METROPOLITAN

Navigating Mental Illness

He ran a successful political campaign, sometimes from a psychiatric ward. He has found a way to thrive. PAGE 1



ARTS & LEISURE

Backstage on Broadway

We talk to actors before their shows go on, including Nicole Scherzinger of “Sunset Boulevard.” PAGE 12

SUNDAY BUSINESS

Drivers’ Long, Long Waits

Los Angeles International Airport, one of the world’s busiest, was once a prime place for gig drivers to earn money. Now, the airport is typical of their increasing desperation. PAGE 6

Buy Local, Often

A grocery store that resembles a farmers’ market in Ann Arbor, Mich., has found success with its local-first approach. But some wonder whether the model will catch on. PAGE 1

