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STATEMENT

Most Reverend John C. Wester, Archbishop of Santa Fe,
Releases Statement on Pope Francis' Final
Urbi et Orbi Address

ALBUQUERQUE – Tuesday, April 22, 2025—IMMEDIATE RELEASE— A statement from Most Reverend John C. Wester, Archbishop of Santa Fe, Pope Francis' final *Urbi et Orbi* address:

Only hours before he drew his final breath, our beloved Pope Francis issued his final *Urbi et Orbi* Address from the balcony of St. Peter Basilica in Rome, an address that captured the heart of his papal ministry. Even though he was still recovering from a serious illness, he was not concerned about himself but about others. He wanted to give his brothers and sisters hope, a hope grounded in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. He wanted believers and unbelievers alike to know that there is hope for the world because our God is a loving and merciful God and we are all his children. He wanted the people of Israel and Gaza, Lebanon and Syria, Ukraine and Yemen, South Caucasus and the western Balkans, as well as many nations in Africa such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan, South Sudan, the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, and the Great Lakes Region to know that he is aware of their suffering, that he is praying for them and that he cares about them. He also warned all the world about the great danger we are in due to the escalating nuclear arms race now underway and he appealed to leaders to heed the call to disarm, as championed by the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

In short, Pope Francis demonstrated once again his firm belief that peace is achievable if only we reject the logic of fear and isolation and instead "...use the resources available to help the needy, to fight hunger, and to encourage initiatives that promote development. These are the 'weapons' of peace: weapons that build the future, instead of sowing seeds of death."

I pray that Pope Francis's heartfelt plea for peace in our world will not go unheeded. And I pray that all of God's children will find hope in the Easter message that calls us to "...share in the life that knows no end, when the clash of arms and the rumble of death will be heard no more." This can only come about if we entrust ourselves to God, who, as Pope Francis reminds us, makes all things new.

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