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MEDIA RELEASE

THE DEATH OF POPE FRANCIS

From Most Rev Anthony Randazzo DD JCL

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It is with great sadness we mourn the passing of Pope Francis. The Holy Father passed away at Casa Santa Marta at 7:35am local Rome time.

A prophetic leader, Pope Francis served as the Bishop of Rome and shepherd of the world's 1.4 billion Catholics since 2013 following the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI.

Born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Jorge Mario Bergoglio became Archbishop of Buenos Aires in 1997 before Pope John Paul II made him cardinal in 2001. During his years in Argentina, and later in Rome, his lifestyle was simple and humble, living in a small apartment, using public transport and working with the homeless and poor.

Even when elected Pope on 13 March 2013, he chose not to live in the official papal residence in the Apostolic Palace but instead in the Vatican guest house.

Pope Francis was the first Jesuit pope, the first from the Americas and the first from the Southern Hemisphere. His parents and grandparents were from northern Italy.

He convoked synods on the family (2014) and youth (2018), however the Synod on Synodality in 2023/2024 is seen by many as the culmination of his papacy, and one of the most important events in the Church since the Second Vatican Council.

As we grieve the passing of Pope Francis, let us remember in our prayers his commitment and unwavering dedication to justice, peace, and hope.

A courageous leader, his papacy will be remembered for its call to reform, to embrace mercy, and to build bridges of understanding.

May we find strength in his papal teaching as we continue the journey of faith in this Holy Year that Pope Francis dedicated to hope, asking us all to be Pilgrims of hope.

Pray for our dear Holy Father who has fallen asleep in the Lord. Pray that Jesus, the Good Shepherd may receive him into the green pastures in Paradise.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him.

Requiescat in pace.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Anthony Handzo