

The American Council of Christian Churches—

- *Provides* information, encouragement, and assistance to Bible-believing churches, fellowships and individuals;
- *Preserves* our Christian heritage through exposure of, opposition to, and separation from doctrinal impurity and compromise in current religious trends and movements;
- *Protects* churches from religious and political restrictions, subtle or obvious, that would hinder their ministries for God; and
- *Promotes* obedience to the inerrant Word of God.



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# THE DEATH OF POPE FRANCIS



A POSITION STATEMENT  
ISSUED IN 2025  
BY THE

AMERICAN COUNCIL  
OF CHRISTIAN  
CHURCHES

EARNESTLY CONTENDING  
FOR THE FAITH  
WHICH WAS ONCE DELIVERED  
UNTO THE SAINTS  
JUDE 3

On the morning of April 21, 2025, the day after Roman Catholics celebrated Easter, Pope Francis died at the age of 88. The following Wednesday, Francis's body was transferred from his residence at the House of St. Martha to St. Peter's Basilica "so that the faithful may pray before his mortal remains" and "for the veneration of all the faithful."<sup>1</sup>

Born Jorge Mario Bergoglio, and finishing a career that began in 2013 with the resignation of his predecessor, Pope Francis is remembered by Catholics as a pope of many firsts.<sup>2</sup> He was the first pope in 718 years to come to the Apostolic Palace prior to his predecessor's death. He was the first to claim the name *Francis*. He was the first Argentine pope. He was the first Jesuit pope.

He is remembered for many other such firsts. One posthumous first that must be credited to the legacy of Pope Francis was his successor Leo's welcome on September 5 of Catholic LGBTQ+ groups at the Vatican's Jubilee 2025. The Catholic LGBTQ+ website, New Ways Ministry, reported: "For the first time in church history, LGBTQ+ Catholic groups are getting ready to participate in the Jubilee, not in spite of their queerness, but through it." These pilgrims were guided through the Vatican's Holy Door with Bishop Francesco Savino, who described the opportunity as "a bell ringing loudly in the deafening silence of exclusion: a clear, strong and irreversible signal that reminds us that the Gospel is not a manifesto for a few elected, but a love letter addressed to the entire human family."<sup>3</sup> These groups owe much to the ministry of Pope Francis, whose 2023 declaration *Fiducia Supplicans* permitted priests to offer non-liturgical blessings to same-sex couples.

Early in Francis's reign, he published an encyclical on climate change, *Laudato Si*.<sup>4</sup> Ignoring God's Noahic Covenant (Gen. 8:22), the document blasphemously labeled Mary the "Queen of all creation" and brazenly called for a Marxist global governmental framework to address the supposed crisis of "a disturbing warming of the climatic system." Francis's environmental efforts included

the invitation to atheist environmental scientist Hans Schellnhuber to address the Amazon Synod, where the Andean mother earth deity Pachamama became a prominent attraction. Francis later blamed covid on an angry and unforgiving Nature.<sup>5</sup>

Francis's magnum opus, *Fratelli tutti*, dedicated 43,000 words to the causes of migration, pluralistic interfaith dialogue, the redistribution of wealth, ending the death penalty, and other socialist ideas. Even his liberal critics learned to oppose his peace overtures to China's CCP with its communist oppression of minority groups. Advancing religious pluralism, Francis signed the Abu Dhabi covenant with Al-Azhar's Grand Imam, Ahmed al Tayyeb. The agreement was soundly denounced by Christian converts from Islam facing the death penalty for apostasy. Another first for a pope, Francis visited the Arabian Peninsula to promote better dialogue with Islam.

Therefore, the American Council of Christian Churches at its 84<sup>th</sup> annual convention, October 21-23, 2025, at Bible Presbyterian Church of Charlotte, NC, resolves to cry out with the voice of our Protestant forefathers and of heaven itself, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partaker of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev. 18:4). The sins of Francis are thankfully over, but the sins of his false church continue. We praise the Lord for each true believer He has saved, but we mourn that there could yet be genuine brethren who still claim the label *Roman Catholic*. May God revive every true believer to decry every false gospel, no matter the attraction of its family ties and ancient traditions, and to affirm together in our local churches the true gospel of Scripture alone, Christ alone, grace alone, faith alone, to the glory of God alone.

<sup>1</sup> Devin Watkins, "Pope Francis has died on Easter Monday aged 88" (vaticannews.ca, 4/21/2025).

<sup>2</sup> Pedro Gabriel, "Francis: A Pope of 'Firsts'" (thecityandtheworld.com, 4/29/2025).

<sup>3</sup> Jules Gomes, "Vatican Officially Recognizes LGBT+ Pilgrimages for Jubilee Year" (thestream.org, 8/19/2025). Jules Gomes (a Cambridge PhD in biblical studies) is a Vatican-accredited journalist based in Rome, who has lectured in Catholic seminaries and universities and served as canon theologian and artistic director at the Roman Catholic Liverpool Cathedral. Note that the true gospel is indeed the manifesto of the few elected, and that most of humanity will be lost (Matt. 7:13-14). Savino's doctrine is that of a false prophet (v. 15).

<sup>4</sup> See the 2015 ACCC resolution, "Resolution on Pope Francis's Encyclical on Climate Change, 'Laudato Si'" (accc4truth.org, 12/10/2015).

<sup>5</sup> Jules Gomes, "Pope Francis's Sharp Left Turn Toward Heresy" (thestream.org, 4/22/2025).