



Anglican Church of Australia

Primate: The Most Reverend Geoffrey Smith

Statement following the death of Pope Francis

I join billions of Christians around the world in thanking God for the life and ministry of Pope Francis. Francis ministered as Pope with great humility, humanity and a real focus on trying to follow the way of Jesus.

Not only did he dedicate his life to serving the poor and standing up for those facing persecution, he was a great advocate for peace during these unsettling times.

I had the privilege of joining with the Primates of the Anglican Communion for a private audience with the Pope in March 2024. He encouraged us in our ministry as bishops and shared from his own experiences some of the joys and challenges. Following his address, we each had the opportunity to greet Pope Francis, an experience I found to be warm and full of good humour.

For Pope Francis' life to end after celebrating Easter is a gift to him and helps focus our ongoing Easter celebrations on Jesus' resurrection, which his followers will share.

My prayers are with those who will soon gather in Rome for the conclave to elect the 267th Pope. May they be guided by the Spirit of God for the benefit of the mission of the Church.

**Archbishop Geoffrey Smith,
Primate of the Anglican Church of Australia
22 April 2025**