Pope: European identity closely tied to Judeo-Christian roots

01.01.2026 | Devin Watkins

10 December 2025 - Pope Leo XIV encourages members of the European Parliament to recall the EU's Judeo-Christian roots and uphold the inherent rights of every person, from conception to natural death.

Pope Leo XIV met on Wednesday with a delegation of the European Conservatives and Reformists Group (ECR) of the European Parliament, a centre-right political group within the European Union's legislative body.

As the group met in Rome, the Pope thanked the democratically elected politicians for their service to their constituents and the wider European community.

He urged them never to forget their duty to include people on the margins of society, as they seek to advance the common good.

Pope Leo noted that the mark of any civilized society is the ability for differences to be debated openly and respectfully, saying this aspect "bears witness to our reverence for the God-given dignity of all men and women."

"I readily echo the appeal of my recent predecessors that European identity can only be understood and promoted in reference to its Judeo-Christian roots," he said.

The reason for upholding this religious legacy, he added, is not only to safeguard the rights of Christian communities or preserve passing social customs or traditions.

Rather, said the Pope, Europe should never forget its Judeo-Christian roots because it is a "recognition of fact."

"Everyone," he said, "is a beneficiary of the contribution that the members of the Christians communities have made and continue to make for the good of European society."

He recalled the cultural heritage of Europe's "towering cathedrals, sublime art and music, and advances in sciences, not to mention the growth and spread of the universities."

"These developments create an intrinsic link between Christianity and European history," he said, calling it "a history which should be cherished and celebrated."

Pope Leo XIV went on to uphold the intellectual patrimony of Christian Europe, which he said is essential for safeguarding the "divinely bestowed rights and inherent worth of every human person, from conception to natural death."

At the same time, Europe's ethical principles provide the groundwork to respond to the challenges posed by poverty, social exclusion, climate issues, and violence.

Copyright JCRelations

“To ensure that the voice of the Church, not least through her social doctrine, continues to be heard,” he said, “is not about the restoration of a past epoch, but of guaranteeing that key resources for future cooperation and integration are not lost.”

Pope Leo then recalled Pope Benedict XVI’s promotion of the dialogue between reason and faith, which interact in a “mutually purifiying” way.

Politicians, concluded Pope Leo, play an important role in fostering respect for the needs and compentencies of every person.

“My prayer is that you will play your own part in engaging positively in this important dialogue, not only for the sake of the people of Europe, but of our entire human family.”

Source: Vatican News, December 10, 2025.

Copyright JCRelations