



World Jewish Congress Mourns Passing of Pope Francis

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21 Apr 2025 - NEW YORK – Upon learning of the passing of Pope Francis, World Jewish Congress President Ronald S. Lauder said:

“It is with great sadness that I join people around the world in mourning the passing of His Holiness Pope Francis, a true moral leader, a man of deep faith and humanity, and a steadfast friend to the Jewish people. From his early years in Argentina to his papacy, Pope Francis was deeply committed to fostering interfaith dialogue and ensuring that the memory of the Holocaust remained a guiding lesson for future generations.

“Under his leadership, the relationship between the Holy See and the World Jewish Congress flourished, culminating in the establishment of a WJC office on Via della Conciliazione, just steps from St. Peter’s Basilica—a testament to our shared commitment to dialogue, understanding and mutual respect.

“In November 2022, our Executive Committee had the honor of convening in Vatican City. There, we held a private audience with Pope Francis where we launched the historic ‘Kishreinu’ (Our Bond) initiative, marking a new chapter in Catholic-Jewish relations and reinforcing the common future of our two peoples.

“I first had the privilege of meeting Pope Francis in 2008 in Buenos Aires, when he was still archbishop. He attended numerous interfaith events co-organized by the World Jewish Congress and our regional affiliate, the Latin American Jewish Congress.

“While there were moments of difficulty, particularly in recent months, I remain deeply appreciative of his warmth, humility and unwavering dedication to meaningful engagement between faith communities.

“On behalf of the World Jewish Congress and the more than 100 Jewish communities around the globe, I extend my deepest condolences to all those who were touched by his remarkable spirit. May his memory be a blessing and an inspiration to us all.”

Source: [World Jewish Congress](#).