

Leo XIV Diagnosed with Cancer (October 13, 2026)

TEACHING GUIDE

What? A surgical procedure to remove a small cancerous tumor from the lung of Pope Leo XIV.

Who? Pope Leo XIV, head of the Catholic Church since May 2025, and the doctors who treated him.

Where? At the Gemelli Hospital in Rome, Italy, very close to the Vatican.

When? On Tuesday, October 13, 2026.

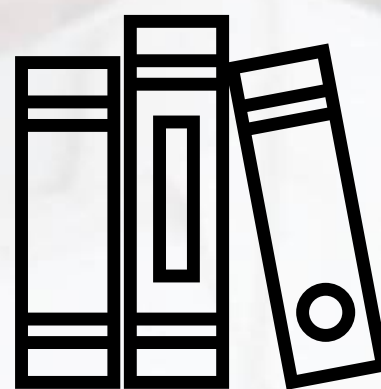
Why is it important? Because the tumor was discovered early, during a routine check-up, and the Pope chose to speak openly about it to the entire world.

For this activity, your goal will be to learn a little more about Leo XIV and cancer.



OBJECTIVES

- Discover the five popes who have served since 1978
- Find specific information on the Vatican's official pages
- Read a date written in Roman numerals
- Understand what cancer is and the role of cells
- Tell true from false based on a video
- Measure distances with the Google Earth Ruler tool



SUBJECTS

- **Social Studies**
 - The Vatican and the Catholic Church
 - Timeline of popes since 1978
 - Geography of Rome
- **Science and Technology**
 - The cell
 - Cancer and tumors
 - The importance of screening
- **Mathematics**
 - Roman numerals
 - Measuring distances (m, km)
- **English**
 - Listening comprehension (video)
 - Finding information



COMPETENCIES

- Search for information on an official website
- Read and interpret a timeline
- Understand a documentary video
- Use a digital tool (Google Earth)
- Estimate and measure distances



DURATION

- Approximately 60 minutes



GETTING STARTED

- Ask the child if they know who the Pope is and where he lives
- Locate Rome and the Vatican on a map of Europe
- Ask them what the word "cell" makes them think of
- Explain that the activity is about an illness, and invite them to ask any questions they have

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

STEP 1 — A Long Line of Popes. Research on the official pages of the last five popes, on the Vatican website, followed by five short-answer questions.

Q1 — Joseph Ratzinger.

Q2 — May 8, 2025. (Do not accept May 18, the date of the Mass inaugurating his pontificate.)

Q3 — September 28, 1978. (His pontificate lasted only 33 days.)

Q4 — Buenos Aires (in Argentina).

Q5 — Poland.

STEP 2 — Learning a Bit More About Cancer.

Viewing of a short video by The Jackson Laboratory, followed by five true-or-false statements.

Q6 — True.

Q7 — True.

Q8 — False. (There are many types of cancer.)

Q9 — False. (Tumors can grow and spread to other parts of the body.)

Q10 — False. (More and more people are surviving cancer.)

STEP 3 — In the Heart of the Vatican. Exploration of St. Peter's Square with Google Earth, distance measurements with the Ruler tool, followed by a location question.

Q11 — About 4 km. (Accept 3.5 to 4.5 km.)

Q12 — About 195 m. (Accept 180 to 210 m.)

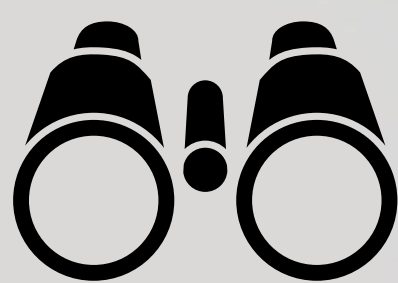
Q13 — About 275 m. (Accept 260 to 290 m.)

Q14 — The Tiber.



WRAPPING UP

- Review what the child has learned
- Discuss what surprised them (a pontificate of 33 days, the smallest country in the world, cells that multiply without stopping)
- Ask: why is it important to detect an illness as early as possible?
- Remind them that they can talk to a trusted adult if they have questions about a loved one's illness



FURTHER EXPLORATION

▶ Twinkl USA. *Who is Pope Leo XIV? for Kids | All About Robert Francis Prevost.*

<https://youtu.be/1Yu8zF1x57A?si=B2W0i0mIVWIA46FH>



EXPLORERS PLUS — The Papal Mystery Word

Mystery phrase: THE CONCLAVE ELECTS THE POPE.

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The papal mystery word

The 20 popes below appear in the Vatican's official list:

www.vatican.va/content/vatican/en/holy-father.html

Find their names in the grid. Words can go in any direction (horizontally, vertically, or diagonally, forwards or backwards).

The leftover letters, read from left to right and top to bottom, form a mystery phrase.

What is it?

F	R	A	N	C	I	S	T	L	E	M
H	O	S	A	L	O	H	C	I	N	A
E	T	T	N	E	C	O	N	N	I	R
C	C	E	L	M	O	N	Y	U	T	T
N	I	P	C	E	L	A	R	S	S	I
S	V	H	A	N	S	I	O	V	E	N
I	E	E	E	T	U	R	G	L	L	A
X	E	N	T	C	I	D	E	N	E	B
T	C	T	H	S	L	A	R	T	C	R
U	T	H	E	O	U	P	G	O	E	U
S	U	I	P	P	J	E	L	U	A	P

Adrian	Linus
Benedict	Martin
Celestine	Nicholas
Clement	Paul
Francis	Peter
Gregory	Pius
Innocent	Sixtus
John	Stephen
Julius	Urban
Leo	Victor

This sentence tells you how the pope is elected!
