

great amount; the LORD has blessed you ^[9b]since my coming. And now, when shall I also provide for my own house?"

31 So he said, "What shall I give you?"

And Jacob said, "You shall not give me anything. If you will do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep your flocks: **32** Let me pass through all your flock today, removing from there all the speckled and spotted sheep, and all the brown ones among the lambs, and the spotted and speckled among the goats; and *these* shall be my wages.

33 So my righteousness will answer for me in time to come, when the subject of my wages comes before you: every one that *is* not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the lambs, will be considered stolen, if *it is* with me."

34 And Laban said, "Oh, that it were according to your word!" **35** So he removed that day the male goats that were speckled and spotted, all the female goats that were speckled and spotted, every one that had *some* white in it, and all the brown ones among the lambs, and gave *them* into the hand of his sons. **36** Then he put three days' journey between himself and Jacob, and Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks.

37 Now Jacob took for himself rods of green poplar and of the almond and chestnut trees, peeled white strips in them, and exposed the white which *was* in the rods.

38 And the rods which he had peeled, he set before the flocks in the gutters, in the watering troughs where the flocks came to drink, so that they should conceive when they came to drink. **39** So the flocks conceived before the rods, and the flocks brought forth streaked, speckled, and spotted. **40** Then Jacob separated the lambs, and made the flocks face toward the streaked and all the brown in the flock of Laban; but he put his own flocks by themselves and did not put them with Laban's flock.

41 And it came to pass, whenever the stronger livestock conceived, that Jacob placed the rods before the eyes of the livestock in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods. **42** But when the flocks were feeble, he did not put *them* in; so the feebler were Laban's and the stronger Jacob's. **43** Thus the man became exceedingly prosperous, and had large flocks, female and male servants, and camels and donkeys.

Jacob Flees from Laban

31 Now *Jacob* heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, "Jacob has taken away all that was our father's, and from what was our father's he has acquired all this wealth."

2 And Jacob saw the countenance of Laban, and indeed it *was* not *favorable* toward him as before. **3** Then the LORD said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your family, and I will be with you."

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4 So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field, to his flock, 5 and said to them, "I see your father's ^[g]countenance, that it is not *favorable* toward me as before; but the God of my father has been with me. 6 And you know that with all my might I have served your father. 7 Yet your father has deceived me and changed my wages ten times, but God did not allow him to hurt me. 8 If he said thus: 'The speckled shall be your wages,' then all the flocks bore speckled. And if he said thus: 'The streaked shall be your wages,' then all the flocks bore streaked. 9 So God has taken away the livestock of your father and given *them* to me.

10 "And it happened, at the time when the flocks conceived, that I lifted my eyes and saw in a dream, and behold, the rams which leaped upon the flocks *were* streaked, speckled, and gray-spotted. 11 Then the Angel of God spoke to me in a dream, saying, 'Jacob.' And I said, 'Here I am.' 12 And He said, 'Lift your eyes now and see, all the rams which leap on the flocks *are* streaked, speckled, and gray-spotted; for I have seen all that Laban is doing to you. 13 I *am* the God of Bethel, where you anointed the pillar *and* where you made a vow to Me. Now arise, get out of this land, and return to the land of your family.' "

14 Then Rachel and Leah answered and said to him, "Is there still any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house? 15 Are we not considered strangers by him? For he has sold us, and also completely consumed our money. 16 For all these riches which God has taken from our father are *really* ours and our children's; now then, whatever God has said to you, do it."

17 Then Jacob rose and set his sons and his wives on camels. 18 And he carried away all his livestock and all his possessions which he had gained, his acquired livestock which he had gained in Padan Aram, to go to his father Isaac in the land of Canaan. 19 Now Laban had gone to shear his sheep, and Rachel had stolen the household^[g] idols that were her father's. 20 And Jacob stole away, ^{took off} unknown to Laban the Syrian, in that he did not tell him that he intended to flee. 21 So he fled with all that he had. He arose and crossed the river, and headed^[gk] toward the mountains of Gilead.

Laban Pursues Jacob

22 And Laban was told on the third day that Jacob had fled. 23 Then he took his brethren with him and pursued him for seven days' journey, and he overtook him in the mountains of Gilead. 24 But God had come to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said to him, "Be careful that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad."

25 So Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mountains, and Laban with his brethren pitched in the mountains of Gilead.

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26 And Laban said to Jacob: "What have you done, that you have stolen away unknown to me, and carried away my daughters like captives *taken* with the sword? 27 Why did you flee away secretly, and steal away from me, and not tell me; for I might have sent you away with joy and songs, with timbrel and harp? 28 And you did not allow me to kiss my sons and my daughters. Now you have done foolishly in so doing. 29 It is in my power to do you harm, but the God of your father spoke to me last night, saying, 'Be careful that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad.' 30 And now you have surely gone because you greatly long for your father's house, but why did you steal my gods?" (Outside of Judeo-Christians all other gods are dead. They are frauds, and they are made by human hands and can even be 'stolen'. How pathetic!)

31 Then Jacob answered and said to Laban, "Because I was afraid, for I said, 'Perhaps you would take your daughters from me by force.' 32 With whomever you find your gods, do not let him live. In the presence of our brethren, identify what I have of yours and take it with you." For Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them.

33 And Laban went into Jacob's tent, into Leah's tent, and into the two maids' tents, but he did not find *them*. Then he went out of Leah's tent and entered Rachel's tent.

34 Now Rachel had taken the ^[gm]household idols, put them in the camel's saddle, and sat on them. And Laban ^[gm]searched all about the tent but did not find *them*. 35 And she said to her father, "Let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise before you, for the manner of women is with me." And he searched but did not find the ^[gm]household idols.

36 Then Jacob was angry and rebuked Laban, and Jacob answered and said to Laban: "What is my ^[gm]trespass? What is my sin, that you have so hotly pursued me?"

37 Although you have searched all my things, what part of your household things have you found? Set *it* here before my brethren and your brethren, that they may judge between us both! 38 These twenty years I *have been* with you; your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried their young, and I have not eaten the rams of your flock. 39 That which was torn *by beasts* I did not bring to you; I bore the loss of it. You required it from my hand, *whether* stolen by day or stolen by night. 40 *There* I was! In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night, and my sleep departed from my eyes. 41 Thus I have been in your house twenty years; I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock, and you have changed my wages ten times. 42 Unless the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God has seen my affliction and the labor of my hands, and rebuked *you* last night."

Laban's Covenant with Jacob

1 Kings 18:18-30 New King James Version

18 And he answered, "I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house *have*, in that you have forsaken the commandments of the LORD and have followed the Baals.

19 Now therefore, send *and* gather all Israel to me on Mount Carmel, the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table."

20 So Ahab sent for all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together on Mount Carmel. **21** And Elijah came to all the people, and said, "How long will you falter between two opinions? If the LORD *is* God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him." But the people answered him not a word. **22** Then Elijah said to the people, "I alone am left a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets *are* four hundred and fifty men. **23** Therefore let them give us two bulls; and let them choose one bull for themselves, cut it in pieces, and lay *it* on the wood, but put no fire *under it*; and I will prepare the other bull, and lay *it* on the wood, but put no fire *under it*. **24** Then you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD; and the God who answers by fire, He is God."

So all the people answered and said, "It is well spoken."

25 Now Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose one bull for yourselves and prepare *it* first, for you *are* many; and call on the name of your god, but put no fire *under it*."

26 So they took the bull which was given them, and they prepared *it*, and called on the name of Baal from morning even till noon, saying, "O Baal, hear us!" But *there was* no voice; no one answered. Then they leaped about the altar which they had made.

27 And so it was, at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, "Cry aloud, for he *is* a god; either he is meditating, or he is busy, or he is on a journey, *or* perhaps he is sleeping and must be awakened." **28** So they cried aloud, and cut themselves, as was their custom, with knives and lances, until the blood gushed out on them. **29** And when midday was past, they prophesied until the *time* of the offering of the *evening* sacrifice. But *there was* no voice; no one answered, no one paid attention.

30 Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come near to me." So all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD *that was* broken down.


False Gods in Ancient Times - Part 1

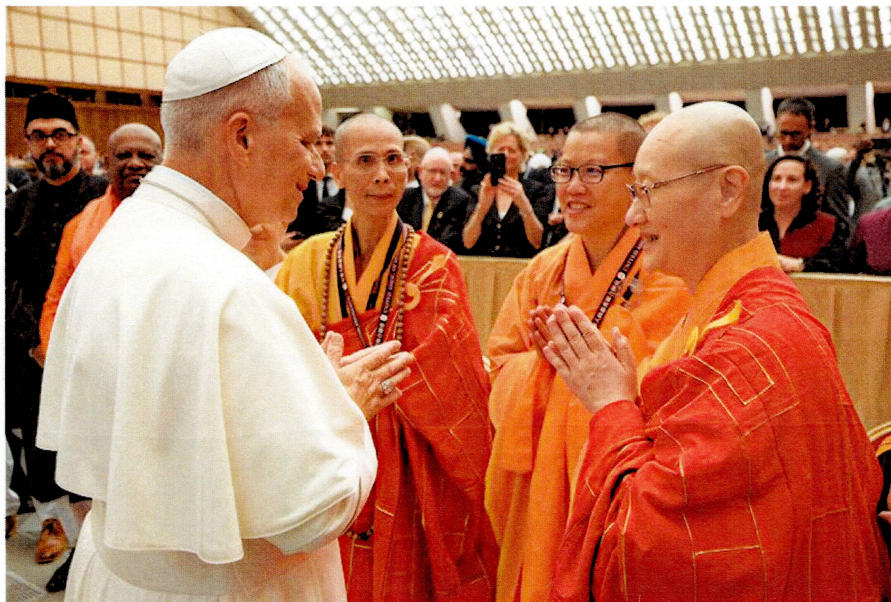
*You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image -- any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me. * in My presence / besides Me, behind Me, next to Me... None!!!
 Exodus 20:3-5

DEITY	COUNTRY	POSITION	REFERENCE
PALESTINE DEITIES IN SCRIPTURE			
Baal	Canaan	Young storm god	1 Kings 16:31; 18:18-46
Ashtoreth	Canaan	Mother-goddess; love; fertility	Judges 2:13; 10:6 1 Samuel 12:10; 1 Kings 11:5
Chemosh	Moab	National god of war	Numbers 21:29; Judges 11:24 1 Kings 11:7, 33; Jeremiah 48:7
Molech	Amnon	National god	Zephaniah 1:5; Jeremiah 49:1 1 Kings 11:5, 7, 33
Dagon	Philista	National god of rain	Judges 16:23 1 Samuel 5:2-7
Queen of Heaven	Canaan	Same as Ashtoreth	Jeremiah 7:18; 11:17-27
PALESTINE DEITIES IN SCRIPTURE			
Marduk	Babylon	Young storm god; chief god	Jeremiah 50:2
Bel	Babylon	Another name for Marduk	Isaiah 46:1 Jeremiah 50:2; 51:44
Nebo (Nabu)	Babylon	Son of Marduk	Isaiah 46:1
Tammuz (Dumuzi)	Sumerian	Young storm god	Ezekiel 8:14



Dialogue is 'way of life' for church, pope says

 By **Cindy Wooden | Catholic News Service**
Nov 5, 2025 6:22:00 PM



Pope Leo XIV greets religious leaders and people involved in interreligious dialogue during an event at the Vatican Oct. 28, 2025, marking the 60th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council declaration "Nostra Aetate" on the church's relations with other religions. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

VATICAN CITY — For the Catholic Church, interreligious dialogue “is not a tactic or a tool, but a way of life — a journey of the heart that transforms everyone involved, the one who listens and the one who speaks,” Pope Leo XIV said.

Dialogue is a journey that people walk “not by abandoning our own faith but by standing firmly within it,” he said. “For authentic dialogue begins not in compromise, but in conviction — in the deep roots of our own beliefs that give us the strength to reach out to others in love.”

Pope Leo made the remarks Oct. 28 at a nighttime celebration marking the 60th anniversary of “Nostra Aetate,” the Second Vatican Council’s declaration on relations with Judaism, Islam and other world religions.

The original document signed by St. Paul VI was placed on the stage in the Vatican audience hall for the event, along with an oil lamp from Assisi and an olive tree, a symbol of peace.

At the beginning of the event, more than 80 representatives of Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Confucianism, Taoism, Shintoism and African Traditional Religions filed into the hall behind a Sri Lankan Buddhist dance troupe and accompanied by children from an Italian choir.

Many of the leaders had personally greeted Pope Leo earlier in the evening at Rome's Colosseum, where they took part in a meeting of religions for peace sponsored by the Community of Sant'Egidio.

About 400 of the 3,000 people in attendance were scholars participating in a three-day conference on "Nostra Aetate" at Rome's Pontifical Gregorian University.

In his remarks, Pope Leo noted how the declaration began as a treatise "describing a new relationship between the Catholic Church and Judaism. We can say, therefore, that the fourth chapter, dedicated to Judaism, is the heart and generative core of the entire declaration."

"For the first time in the history of the church, we have a doctrinal text with an explicitly theological basis that illustrates the Jewish roots of Christianity in a well-founded biblical manner," the pope said. "At the same time, 'Nostra Aetate' takes a firm stand against all forms of antisemitism."

The declaration "teaches that we cannot truly call on God, the Father of all, if we refuse to treat in a brotherly or sisterly way any man or woman created in the image of God," Pope Leo said. "Indeed, the church rejects all forms of discrimination or harassment because of race, color, condition of life or religion."

With "Nostra Aetate," he said, "a seed of hope for interreligious dialogue was planted. Today, your presence bears witness that this seed has grown into a mighty tree, its branches reaching far and wide, offering shelter and bearing the rich fruits of understanding, friendship, cooperation and peace."

At the end of the evening, the children gave each participant a small bag of seeds, symbolizing the shared mission to continue planting seeds of dialogue and hope for future generations.

Pope Leo listed four teachings of "Nostra Aetate" that he said remain "highly relevant today":

"Humanity is drawing closer together," and it is "the task of the church to promote unity and love among men and women, and among nations."

"It points to what we all share in common. We belong to one human family — one in origin and one also in our final goal. Moreover, every person seeks answers to the great riddles of the human condition."

All religions "try to respond to the restlessness of the human heart. Each, in its own way, offers teachings, ways of life and sacred rites that help guide their followers toward peace and meaning."

(it's called signature!)

"The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions, which 'reflect a ray of that truth which enlightens all people.' She regards them with sincere reverence and invites her sons and daughters, through dialogue and collaboration, to recognize, preserve and promote what is spiritually, morally and culturally good in all peoples."

Sixty years after the church called people "to look beyond what separates us and to discover what unites us all," he said, people struggle to do so.

"We see walls rising again — between nations, between religions, even between neighbors," the pope said.

"The noise of conflict, the wounds of poverty and the cry of the earth remind us how fragile our human family remains," Pope Leo said.

"As religious leaders, guided by the wisdom of our respective traditions," he said, "we share a sacred responsibility: to help our people to break free from the chains of prejudice, anger and hatred; to help them rise above egoism and self-centeredness; to help them overcome the greed that destroys both the human spirit and the earth."

When so many people are tempted to despair, Pope Leo said, religious leaders must "reawaken in all men and women their sense of humanity and of the sacred" and work "to keep hope alive, to keep dialogue alive and to keep love alive in the heart of the world."

Also, In October 2020, "the Vatican issued a coin representing a young pregnant woman carrying the world in her womb and having wheat in her hair" (ewtnnews.com vatican) - Mother Earth?