



**Press release**  
**For immediate release**

### **The Archbishop of Toronto elevated to the College of Cardinals**

**OTTAWA, 6 October, 2024** — Today, Pope Francis announced a Consistory for the creation of 20 new Cardinals from around the world to be held in Vatican City on 8 December 2024 (Feast of the Immaculate Conception). The Most Reverend Francis Leo, Archbishop of Toronto, is among those who will be elevated to the College of Cardinals and will become the 18<sup>th</sup> Cardinal in the history of the Catholic Church in Canada. With this appointment, Canada will now have five Cardinals, with the four others being: His Eminence Gérald Cyprien Cardinal Lacroix, Archbishop of Quebec and Primate of Canada, His Eminence Thomas Cardinal Collins, Archbishop Emeritus of Toronto, His Eminence Marc Cardinal Ouellet, Archbishop Emeritus of Quebec and Prefect Emeritus of the Dicastery for Bishops, and His Eminence Michael F. Cardinal Czerny, S.J., Prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.

Cardinal-elected Francis Leo was born in Montreal in 1971. He began his journey into the priesthood by enrolling at the Grand Séminaire de Montréal in 1990 and was ordained as a priest for the Archdiocese on 14 December 1996. Following his ordination, he served in various parishes in Montreal until 2006, when he was invited to study at the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy in Rome. This led him to the Diplomatic Service of the Holy See where he worked in various Apostolic Nunciatures across the world from 2006 to 2012. In January 2012, Pope Benedict XVI honored him with the title of Monsignor and appointed him as Chaplain of His Holiness.

Cardinal-elect Leo taught theology and philosophy at the Grand Séminaire de Montréal, and provided spiritual guidance to seminarians. In 2015, he became the General Secretary of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB), a role he held until 2021.

On 1 February 2022, he was appointed Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia for the Archdiocese of Montreal. On 16 July 2022, Pope Francis appointed him Auxiliary Bishop of Montreal, and his episcopal ordination took place on 12 September 2022. He became the Archbishop of Toronto on 11 February 2023.

Cardinal-elect Leo holds advanced degrees in Canon Law from Lateran University, Diplomacy and International Law, and a Doctorate in Systematic Theology from the University of Dayton/IMRI, specializing in Mariology. He also has a Licentiate in Philosophy, a Diploma in Classical Studies from the Université de Montréal, and a Graduate Certificate in Spiritual Direction from the Aquinas Institute of Theology. His teaching experience spans several countries, including Canada, Australia, and the United States.

**Maribel Mayorga**

Director of Communications

Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB)

Email: [communications@ccb.ca](mailto:communications@ccb.ca)

Telephone: 613-241-9461, ext. 225