

# Anwar remembers Pope Francis' legacy of compassion

**PETALING JAYA:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has expressed deep sorrow over the passing of Pope Francis.

He highlighted the Pope's enduring legacy as a moral beacon of compassion, humility and justice in a tumultuous world.

"As the first pope from the Global South, Pope Francis's commitment to interfaith understanding, environmental stewardship and the dignity of the marginalised extended far beyond the reach of the Catholic Church," he said in a statement on his Facebook yesterday.

Anwar said Francis was a steadfast advocate for peace, and his efforts to build bridges across faiths and cultures earned the respect of many, including in the Muslim world.

"He spoke with moral clarity on the immense suffering in Gaza, reminding the world that we must show the same compassion to all victims of violence, wherever they may be.

"He also championed the dignity of migrants and refugees, urging the international community to respond to their plight with



**Global loss:** A portrait of Francis sits at the Catholic Church of St Catherine in Saint Petersburg, Russia. - AFP

humanity and conscience."

Anwar said he had the honour of meeting Francis during his early days at the Vatican.

"On behalf of the Government and people of Malaysia, I extend

our deepest condolences to the Holy See, to Catholics around the world, including especially to the Catholic community in Malaysia," he said.

National Unity Minister Datuk

Aaron Ago Dagang also extended his heartfelt condolences to the worldwide Catholic community following Francis' passing.

"Pope Francis was renowned for his tireless advocacy on global issues, including justice for Gaza.

"He continuously championed issues of poverty, refugees, social justice and especially justice for Gaza, which he also touched upon in his last Easter Sunday address.

"Pope Francis was known as a humble religious leader, full of love and courageous in championing the voices of the marginalised," he said.

Aaron also lauded Francis as a religious leader who truly embodied unity by nurturing harmony amidst cultural and religious plurality.

"He embodied the true meaning of unity by calling for interfaith dialogue, respecting diversity and fostering harmony among diverse cultures and beliefs," he added.

Sarawak Deputy Premier Datuk Dr Sim Kui Hian also expressed his sadness over Francis' passing.

"As a spiritual leader who

championed compassion, humility and care for the marginalised, his influence extended far beyond the Catholic Church to touch people of all faiths and backgrounds.

"Pope Francis's voice for peace and human dignity resonated across the world," he said.

Dr Sim noted that Francis' dedication - building bridges between communities, championing environmental care and commitment to social equity and justice - leave an enduring legacy.

"I extend my deepest condolences to Catholics in Sarawak, Malaysia and worldwide.

"May he rest in peace, and may his memory inspire us all to continue working towards spreading peace, compassion and mutual respect."

Vatican camerlengo Cardinal Kevin Ferrell said in a statement that Pope Francis passed away yesterday.

He was 88.