

Anwar sends well wishes to Catholics

PETALING JAYA: Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has congratulated Catholics in Malaysia and around the world on the election of a new pope.

The Prime Minister said the historic occasion marks a new chapter for the global Catholic community.

"I am confident it will be a source of renewed purpose and inspiration. Malaysia values its ties with the Holy See and we look forward to continued engagement rooted in mutual respect, dialogue and our shared commitment to peace and human dignity," Anwar said in a

Facebook post yesterday.

Chicago-born Robert Francis Prevost was on Thursday elected by fellow cardinals to lead the world's 1.4 billion Catholics after a secret conclave in the Vatican's Sistine Chapel, becoming the first American pontiff in history.

The 69-year-old, who spent two decades doing missionary work in Peru, took the name Pope Leo XIV.

In his first speech to the crowds packed into St Peter's Square on Thursday evening, Pope Leo echoed his predecessor Pope Francis, who died on April 21, with a call for peace.

National Unity Minister Datuk Aaron Ago Dagang also extended his congratulations to the new pope on his election as the 267th Supreme Pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church.

He described the election as a momentous occasion not only for the Catholic faithful but also for people of all religions around the world.

"Your dedication to social justice, inclusivity and compassion reflects the very values that we in Malaysia strive to uphold in our multicultural and multireligious society," he said in a Facebook post.

Aaron also offered his prayers for the new pope's leadership, hoping that it will bring a new era of global unity and mutual respect.

"May Almighty God grant you wisdom, strength and grace in leading the global community through these transformative times. Your leadership offers renewed hope for global solidarity, healing and mutual respect," he said.