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Latest: 91 Lawmakers Urge Congress Leaders to Invite Pope Leo XIV to Address Joint Session

A true story of faith under pressure. Read the first half below, then continue online.

KEY SPIRITUAL TAKEAWAY

"Unique perspective"

(Transliterated from the original Hindi.)

They had gathered only to pray. When prayer itself becomes the target, faith is proved not by words but by staying.

The Story - Part One

Ninety-one members of the US House have signed a bipartisan letter asking congressional leaders to formally invite Pope Leo XIV to address a joint session of Congress at the beginning of the 120th Congress in January. The letter, dated 30 October 2026, was addressed to Speaker Mike Johnson, a Louisiana Republican, and Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, a New York Democrat. It was led by two Catholic lawmakers from opposite parties: Representative Mike Thompson, a California Democrat, and Representative Brian Fitzpatrick, a Pennsylvania Republican.

Only one pope has ever addressed a joint session of Congress. Pope Francis did it in 2015, speaking to a packed House chamber about immigration, the death penalty and the care of creation. Now, eleven years later, 91 lawmakers want the first American-born pope to take the same podium. The letter calls Leo's "unique perspective" and his "ties to our country" a potential "unifying force" - and describes him as a "sign of great pride" for the nation that raised him.

Pope Leo XIV was born Robert Francis Prevost in Chicago and became the first American-born pope in 2025. That fact sits at the centre of the letter. The signers are not only asking for a papal visit. They are asking for a moment when an American who now leads the world's 1.4 Billion Catholics stands before the American legislature and speaks as both a pastor and a fellow citizen.

The timing of the letter was no accident. It was published just four days before the midterm elections of 3 November 2026, in which Democrats took control of both the House and the Senate. The letter's authors knew the ground was about to shift beneath them - and in a sense, that is what makes the request so interesting. It was written by the old Congress, for a new Congress that had not yet been seated, in a seperate political moment.

Pope Leo XIV Congress Invitation: A Bipartisan Ask In A Divided House

The letter's bipartisan character is its strongest card: in a Congress where the two parties agree on almost nothing, 91 members from both sides signed the same request.

The Turning Point - What Happens Next

The story reaches a life-changing moment that changes everything -- and what seemed like the end is only the middle. Two reports disagree on the numbers, and one question is left unanswered: will the CCTV footage ever come out? Read the full story to find out what happens next.

PERSONAL REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When gathering to pray carries a real cost, what keeps a community coming together anyway -- and what would keep you coming?

2. The pastor's sister shielded him with her own body and fainted under the blows. What does costly, self-giving love look like in your own family or church?

3. When justice is delayed and a complaint is withdrawn under threat, how do believers hold on to truth without giving in to fear -- or to hatred?

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