

Poor management as Bishop of Chiclayo hampers Cardinal Prevost's chances of becoming Pope.

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Universal Church

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Robert Francis Prevost

After twelve years of pontificate in which the Spanish language has occupied important positions within the Roman Curia, it seems difficult (but not impossible) for the cardinals to once again opt for a cardinal whose second language is Spanish.

In recent days, the name of Robert Prevost, who served as Prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops for two years, has begun to be heard loudly in Rome. This Augustinian cardinal of American nationality enjoys the sympathy of the pro-Francis Curia and could be the alternative if the candidacies of Parolin and Tagle fail. Parolin is haunted by the shadow of secret agreements with the Chinese communist regime and his disastrous role in the Valley of the Fallen

controversy, having yielded to blackmail by the Spanish government. For Tagle, the **bankruptcy of Caritas Internationalis** and his videos as a star on "The Voice" could be enough for the cardinals to give up on the Filipino.

For this reason, Latin American and European circles are already working to promote the candidacy of **Robert Prevost**, who served as bishop of Chiclayo, Peru, for almost ten years before moving to Rome to produce bishops in the spirit of Francis. It was in January 2023 that the Pope brought Prevost to Rome to replace Cardinal Ouellet as prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops. That same year, in September, the Pope created him a cardinal.

Prevost's controversial tenure as Bishop of Chiclayo

When Prevost arrived at the Vatican, little was known about him beyond some details of his handling of the pandemic, such as requiring Communion in the hand and requiring confessions to be conducted by telephone to avoid physical contact.

But since March 2024, the shadow of having mishandled some abuse cases that occurred in his diocese has haunted him. A group of victims **sent the Pope a letter** explaining that in 2019, when Prevost was bishop of the diocese of Chiclayo, a priest from his diocese, Eleuterio Vásquez Gonzales, allegedly sexually assaulted three minors and that Prevost "took no action." Less well-known is the case of priest José Burga, also accused of child abuse; but until now, it has been archived by the diocesan curia.

At the time, Cardinal Prevost avoided directly answering the questions posed by this media outlet and referred us to the press office of the Diocese of Chiclayo, which in a statement justified Prevost's good conduct in this case. In September 2024, **the accusation against Prevost gained even more strength** when two of the allegedly abused girls gave their testimony on a television program.

A few days later, something unusual came to light: the Peruvian Episcopal Conference, instead of addressing this accusation, decided to go on the attack **and persecute the priest Ricardo Coronado Arrascue**, who served as the victims' defense attorney. **In an unprecedented statement**, the Peruvian Episcopal Conference prohibited this canonist priest from defending these victims. Since then, an ecclesiastical campaign has been unleashed under the pontificate

of "zero tolerance" against this priest who defends abuse victims. In addition to prohibiting him from being a lawyer to represent abuse victims in the face of the inaction and concealment of some bishops, the bishop of the Cajamarca diocese, Isaac Circuncisión Martínez Chuquizana, has since sought to have Ricardo Coronado removed from the priesthood, having been invited to voluntarily request a dispensation. He enlisted the support of the bishop of Chota, Víctor Villegas Suclupe, both of whom are loyal followers of Cardinal Prevost.

The bishop's pressure had the desired effect. InfoVaticana has been able to confirm that in December 2024, the Dicastery for the Clergy, of which Cardinal Prevost is a member, censured Ricardo Coronado Arrascue, supposedly with the specific approval of Pope Francis. His lawyer had previously gone to the aforementioned dicastery to review the case and was informed that she found nothing extraordinary, nor any reason for censure. The speed with which this case against this Peruvian priest of the Diocese of Cajamarca was initiated and closed was strange, and it was proving to be a thorn in Cardinal Prevost's side. He was not allowed access to the minutes of the "trial," there was no reading of charges, nor did he learn the results of a preliminary investigation, whether it was truly conducted in accordance with the law, or rather, seeking to find any crime. In the end, the Dicastery prohibited him from sponsoring causes worldwide.

Furthermore, days before the Pope's death, this media outlet received information that the Diocese of Chiclayo had allegedly paid \$150,000 to abuse victims who accused Cardinal Prevost of covering up the abuse. The diocese's response to date has been silence.

Cardinal Prevost also has other cases in which he has displayed his vengeful nature: two priests from the diocese of Chiclayo—a former parish priest of the cathedral and a former rector of the seminary—who were forced to seek refuge in other dioceses.

The truth is that during these twelve years of his pontificate, Pope Francis has tried to combat sexual abuse within the Church, although his decisions in many cases have gone against what he preached. Scandalous cases such as those of the Argentine bishop Gustavo Zanchetta and the Jesuit Marko Rupnik have undermined Francis's credibility and his rhetoric about combating this scourge in recent years. A double standard has been evident depending on who the

perpetrator was, and in the case of Prevost, some bishops have been removed from office for less.

<https://infovaticana.com/2025/04/30/la-mala-gestion-como-obispo-de-chiclayo-las-tra-las-opciones-del-cardenal-prevost-para-ser-papa/>