**POPE LEO AND OUR LADY OF GRACE**

With God there are no coincidences. Sometimes God uses details and coincidences to get our attention and to teach us lessons. Recently, there was a special message from heaven on the day of the election of Pope Leo XIV. As you may know, Pope Leo is an Augustinian priest. He did his undergraduate studies in mathematics at Villanova University, an Augustinian school. Most religious communities have a devotion to the Blessed Mother under a particular title of hers. The Augustinians have a devotion to Mary as Our Lady of Grace. The Augustinians honor Our Lady of Grace on May 8th. By God’s design, Robert Francis Prevost was elected our new Holy Father, on the Augustinian Feast of Our Lady of Grace, May 8th. Is this just a coincidence? I do not think so.

I would like to say a little more about Our Lady of Grace. In this image, Mary has her hands extended to the earth with rays of grace radiating from some of her fingers. Someone once asked her why there were not rays extending from all of her fingers. Mary replied that there were fingers without rays because they represented graces that people had not prayed for. We need to ask for God’s graces. Jesus said, “Ask and you shall receive.”

I truly believe that Our Blessed Mother had a hand in the election of Pope Leo. In the matter of world history, Mary has said that in the end, her Immaculate Heart will triumph! It is comforting that we can see Mary’s hand in the care of the Catholic Church.

God bless.

***Father Nick***

**FROM THE PASTOR’S DESK**