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Pope Leo XIV greets people at the conclusion of his weekly general audience in the Paul VI Audience Hall at the Vatican Jan. 14, 2026. (CNS/Vatican Media)

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If Christians are to speak about God, then they must dedicate time each day and week to listening to God's word in prayer and the liturgy, Pope Leo XIV said.

"We are called to live and cultivate friendship with the Lord" through prayer, he said Jan. 14 during his weekly general audience.

"This is achieved first of all in liturgical and community prayer, in which we do not decide what to hear from the Word of God, but it is he himself who speaks to us through the Church," he said. "It is then achieved in personal prayer, which takes place in the interiority of the heart and mind."

"Time dedicated to prayer, meditation and reflection cannot be lacking in the Christian's day and week," he said. "Only when we speak with God can we also speak about him."

Speaking to visitors gathered in the Paul VI Audience Hall for the general audience, the pope continued a new series of talks dedicated to the Second Vatican Council, which "rediscovered the face of God as the Father who, in Christ, calls us to be his children," Leo said in his first talk introducing the series Jan. 7.

He dedicated his Jan. 14 catechesis to the Vatican II Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, Dei Verbum, calling it "one of the most beautiful and important" documents of the council.

The document, published in 1965, affirms "a fundamental point of Christian faith," that "Jesus Christ radically transforms man's relationship with God," who is no longer invisible or distant, but has been made flesh, he said.

Out of the abundance of his love, the Lord "speaks to men as friends and lives among them, so that he may invite and take them into fellowship with himself," he said. "The only condition of the New Covenant is love."

While the Covenant is eternal, and "nothing can separate us from his love," the revelation of God has "the dialogical nature of friendship," which "does not tolerate

silence, but is nurtured by the exchange of true words," he said.

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Just as human friendships can end with "a dramatic gesture of rupture or because of a series of daily acts of neglect that erode the relationship until it is lost," one's friendship with Jesus must be cultivated and cared for daily, Leo said.

Therefore, the first step is to cultivate an "attitude of listening, so that the divine Word may penetrate our minds and our hearts," he said. "At the same time, we are required to speak with God, not to communicate to him what he already knows, but to reveal ourselves to ourselves."

"If Jesus calls us to be friends, let us not leave this call unheeded," he said.

"Let us take care of this relationship, and we will discover that friendship with God is our salvation," he said.