

DON McLEAN SPEAKS AT OXFORD UNION

"AMERICAN PIE" AND "BORN IN THE USA" BECOME THEME SONGS WELCOMING POPE LEO XIV AS FIRST AMERICAN POPE

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, May 12, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Don McLean](#) is not only known for his songwriting skills, but for his business sense having two business degrees. However, it is more than those few things that make McLean a special individual, it's his knack for wanting teachable moments. "You know my parents never understood my wanting to make a living doing music. They would have preferred me to get a college education and go work a nine to five job and know without a shadow of a doubt that I was going to be able to pay my bills. But, that was not for me! Music was calling my name and I had to go with it," says the Grammy honored singer-songwriter Don McLean. "Now, I like to take all that I have learned over the past 50 years in music and teach others the highs and lows of all business, of how great and how bad the world can be, and so many other things and that is what I was more excited about with this trip to speak at Oxford."

McLean was honored to be the guest speaker at the Oxford Union, where so many like Elton John, rapper Common, Glastonbury founder Michael Eavis, Tom Hanks, The White Stripes' Jack White, former US Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, actor Sean Penn, and others have stood behind the podium. "I had an amazing time and I hope that everyone took something away from what I had to say," adds McLean.

In addition, this weekend proved to become even more of a highlight for McLean as the first American Pope was selected and his hit song "American Pie" blared over the loud speakers welcoming him as Pope Leo XIV.

One day after the Chicago-born Prevost became Pope Leo XIV, the cardinals met on a stage decorated with the Stars and Stripes and a Vatican flag at the Pontifical North American College. The hilltop institution for U.S. seminarians is a short walk from St. Peter's Basilica, where Leo made his first speech to the world on Thursday evening as the new leader of the Catholic Church's global faithful of 1.4 billion people.

"I am thrilled beyond belief to know that my song "American Pie" was used to welcome the new Pope into his new role. This song has a different meaning for everyone and was written so people could interpret it the way they wanted to. But, to have the cardinals choose American Pie along with Born In The USA as the two songs to highlight Pope Leo XIV coming from America is really something special."

About Don McLean:

Don McLean is a GRAMMY Award honoree, a Songwriter Hall of Fame member, and a BBC Lifetime Achievement Award recipient. His smash hit "American Pie" resides in the Library of Congress National Recording Registry and was named a Top 5 Song of the 20th Century by the Recording Industry of America (RIAA). A New York native, Don McLean is one of American history's most revered and respected songwriters. After paying his dues in the New York club scene in the late 1960s, he went on to score mega-hits like "Vincent (Starry, Starry Night)," "Castles in the Air" and many more. His catalog of songs has been recorded by Madonna, Garth Brooks, Josh Groban, Drake, "Weird Al" Yankovic, and countless others. In 2015, McLean's handwritten manuscript of "American Pie" lyrics was auctioned by Christie's, selling for just over \$1.2 Million. 2019 honored Don with a star on the Las Vegas Walkway of Stars, and his song "And I Love You So" was the theme for Prince Harry and Megan Markle's wedding. Don landed a new recording contract with Time Life in 2020, with whom he released a catalog of recordings and a new album 'Still Playin' Favorites.' In 2021, Don's "American Pie" was featured in the Avengers' Black Widow and the Tom Hanks movie Finch. McLean received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, celebrated the 50th anniversary of "American Pie," and recorded a version of the song with a cappella group Home Free. In 2022, McLean received six Telly Awards for his collaboration with international heavyweight Tyson Fury, released American Pie: A Fable children's book, and was inducted into the Musicians Hall of Fame. In 2023, the Telly award-winning documentary The Day The Music Died was released on DVD and Blu-Ray. In 2024, President Yoon of South Korea sang "American Pie" for a delighted audience of White House guests in Washington, D.C. McLean was inducted into the Music City Walk of Fame during a public ceremony along with Darius Rucker, Joe Galante, and Duane Eddy in Nashville, Tennessee. His latest album, 'American Boys,' was also released in 2024.

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