

@OARECOLETOS

Pope Leo XIV

**100 days**

of pontificate



# **100 Days, 100 Words from Pope Leo XIV: A Pontificate of Heart, Wisdom, and Charity**

Collection of Discourses from the First 100 Days of the Pontificate  
of Pope Leo XIV

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## **100 Days, 100 Words from Pope Leo XIV: A Pontificate of Heart, Wisdom, and Charity**

One hundred days. A hundred short texts, yet filled with passion, worthy of a son of Saint Augustine. In this beginning of his pontificate, we have come to know Robert Francis Prevost more deeply. Through these 100 documents, we discover that the Spirit is not governed by numbers, but by love. Already, we can glimpse what the coming years of our journey as Church may look like.

To celebrate these first 100 days of the pontificate, we Augustinian Recollects have prepared this document to share with you the first words of Pope Leo XIV: what can be read right away from this “son of Saint Augustine.”

It is still too soon to draw final conclusions, but not too soon to perceive the tone. And the tone of Pope Leo XIV has already become recognizable: close, profound, Augustinian. We have a Pope with clear convictions: the war must end, and the way forward is peace.

From his very first greeting—“Peace be with you all!”—to his words to ordinands or to families across the world, there runs a common thread: love. Not an abstract or diplomatic love, but the love of Christ: the love that gives itself, that bends down in service.

It is a love that builds bridges, not walls. A love that dirties its hands without ceasing to look toward heaven. A love that gives Peter authority not through power, but through service. Not through control, but through trust. It is the love of a prior—not the most important one, but the first to watch over the care of his brothers.

He has already cited Saint Augustine forty-nine times. This is no coincidence. Leo XIV is not Augustinian only by history, but by vocation. His way of seeing the world flows through the restless heart, through communion in diversity, through the humble search for truth. He also speaks often of the Spirit—not as a decorative figure, but as the sure guide of a Church that goes forth. A synodal Church, yes, but above all a

fraternal one: that listens, that does not impose, that accompanies.

He speaks of the poor, of the young, of pastors, of the laity, of grandparents. All appear in his speeches. He does not speak to anyone from above; he speaks to all with clarity and with charity. And this is another of his hallmarks: a clear word, without harshness. Firm, without aggression. Tender, without weakness. He lives according to the logic of Augustine's episcopacy: "For you I am a bishop, with you I am a Christian" (Saint Augustine, Sermon 340).

In these 100 days, 35 homilies have been published on the Vatican's official website. He has mentioned Mary 138 times. He has uttered the word "to love" more than 240 times. He does not seek headlines; he seeks meaning. And he does so from a faith deeply confident that good is stronger than evil.

We could call him a digital Pope, but not because of his presence on social media. Rather, because he understands that everything is connected. He speaks little about the internet, but much about bonds. Yes, he names social networks—but he insists even more on the networks of mercy, of listening, of shared prayer. The Holy Father urges us to weave a network that sustains the world and gives it strength. He is not afraid of the world's complexity, but neither does he resign himself to it.

We do not yet know where Leo XIV will lead us, but we do know how he walks: without stridency, without anxiety, without haste, yet without pause. As one who knows that the Church belongs to Christ, and that the urgent must never crush the important.

**Fray Alfonso Dávila, OAR  
Communications Office, Order of Augustinian Recollects**

# 100 Days, 100 Words from Pope Leo XIV

## **1. FIRST BLESSING “URBI ET ORBI” OF HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIV Thursday, 8 May 2025**

Peace be with you all!

Dear brothers and sisters, these are the first words spoken by the risen Christ, the Good Shepherd who laid down his life for God’s flock. I would like this greeting of peace to resound in your hearts, in your families, among all people, wherever they may be, in every nation and throughout the world. Peace be with you!

It is the peace of the risen Christ. A peace that is unarmed and disarming, humble and persevering. A peace that comes from God, the God who loves us all, unconditionally.

We can still hear the faint yet ever courageous voice of Pope Francis as he blessed Rome, the Pope who blessed Rome, who gave his blessing to the world, the whole world, on the morning of Easter. Allow me to extend that same blessing: God loves us, God loves you all, and evil will not prevail! All of us are in God’s hands. So, let us move forward, without fear, together, hand in hand with God and with one another other! We are followers of Christ. Christ goes before us. The world needs his light. Humanity needs him as the bridge that can lead us to God and his love. Help us, one and all, to build bridges through dialogue and encounter, joining together as one people, always at peace. Thank you, Pope Francis!

I also thank my brother Cardinals, who have chosen me to be the Successor of Peter and to walk together with you as a Church, united, ever pursuing peace and justice, ever seeking to act as men and women faithful to Jesus Christ, in order to proclaim the Gospel without fear, to be missionaries.

I am an Augustinian, a son of Saint Augustine, who once said, “With you I am a Christian, and for you I am a bishop.” In this sense, all of us can

journey together toward the homeland that God has prepared for us.

A special greeting to the Church of Rome! Together, we must look for ways to be a missionary Church, a Church that builds bridges and encourages dialogue, a Church ever open to welcoming, like this Square with its open arms, all those who are in need of our charity, our presence, our readiness to dialogue and our love.

Y si me permiten también una palabra, un saludo a todos y en modo particular a mi querida diócesis de Chiclayo, en el Perú, donde un pueblo fiel ha acompañado a su obispo, ha compartido su fe y ha dado tanto, tanto, para seguir siendo Iglesia fiel de Jesucristo.

(Translation)

And if you also allow me a brief word, a greeting to everyone and in particular to my beloved Diocese of Chiclayo, in Peru, where a faithful people has accompanied its Bishop, shared its faith and given so much, so much, to continue being a faithful Church of Jesus Christ.

To all of you, brothers and sisters in Rome, in Italy, throughout the world: we want to be a synodal Church, a Church that moves forward, a Church that always seeks peace, that always seeks charity, that always seeks to be close above all to those who are suffering.

Today is the day of the Prayer of Supplication to Our Lady of Pompeii. Our Mother Mary always wants to walk at our side, to remain close to us, to help us with her intercession and her love. So I would like to pray together with you. Let us pray together for this new mission, for the whole Church, for peace in the world, and let us ask Mary, our Mother, for this special grace: Hail Mary...

**2.HOMILY OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV**  
**Sistine Chapel**  
**Friday, 9 May 2025**

I will begin with a word in English, and the rest is in Italian.

But I want to repeat the words from the Responsorial Psalm: "I will sing

a new song to the Lord, because he has done marvels.”

And indeed, not just with me but with all of us. My brother Cardinals, as we celebrate this morning, I invite you to recognize the marvels that the Lord has done, the blessings that the Lord continues to pour out on all of us through the Ministry of Peter.

You have called me to carry that cross, and to be blessed with that mission, and I know I can rely on each and every one of you to walk with me, as we continue as a Church, as a community of friends of Jesus, as believers to announce the Good News, to announce the Gospel.

“You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Mt 16:16). In these words, Peter, asked by the Master, together with the other disciples, about his faith in him, expressed the patrimony that the Church, through the apostolic succession, has preserved, deepened and handed on for two thousand years.

Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God: the one Saviour, who alone reveals the face of the Father.

In him, God, in order to make himself close and accessible to men and women, revealed himself to us in the trusting eyes of a child, in the lively mind of a young person and in the mature features of a man (cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, 22), finally appearing to his disciples after the resurrection with his glorious body. He thus showed us a model of human holiness that we can all imitate, together with the promise of an eternal destiny that transcends all our limits and abilities.

Peter, in his response, understands both of these things: the gift of God and the path to follow in order to allow himself to be changed by that gift. They are two inseparable aspects of salvation entrusted to the Church to be proclaimed for the good of the human race. Indeed, they are entrusted to us, who were chosen by him before we were formed in our mothers’ wombs (cf. Jer 1:5), reborn in the waters of Baptism and, surpassing our limitations and with no merit of our own, brought here and sent forth from here, so that the Gospel might be proclaimed to every creature (cf. Mk 16:15).

In a particular way, God has called me by your election to succeed the Prince of the Apostles, and has entrusted this treasure to me so that, with his help, I may be its faithful administrator (cf. 1 Cor 4:2) for the sake of the entire mystical Body of the Church. He has done so in order that

she may be ever more fully a city set on a hill (cf. Rev 21:10), an ark of salvation sailing through the waters of history and a beacon that illumines the dark nights of this world. And this, not so much through the magnificence of her structures or the grandeur of her buildings – like the monuments among which we find ourselves – but rather through the holiness of her members. For we are the people whom God has chosen as his own, so that we may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called us out of darkness into his marvellous light (cf. 1 Pet 2:9).

Peter, however, makes his profession of faith in reply to a specific question: “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” (Mt16:13). The question is not insignificant. It concerns an essential aspect of our ministry, namely, the world in which we live, with its limitations and its potential, its questions and its convictions.

“Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” If we reflect on the scene we are considering, we might find two possible answers, which characterize two different attitudes.

First, there is the world’s response. Matthew tells us that this conversation between Jesus and his disciples takes place in the beautiful town of Caesarea Philippi, filled with luxurious palaces, set in a magnificent natural landscape at the foot of Mount Hermon, but also a place of cruel power plays and the scene of betrayals and infidelity. This setting speaks to us of a world that considers Jesus a completely insignificant person, at best someone with an unusual and striking way of speaking and acting. And so, once his presence becomes irksome because of his demands for honesty and his stern moral requirements, this “world” will not hesitate to reject and eliminate him.

Then there is the other possible response to Jesus’ question: that of ordinary people. For them, the Nazarene is not a charlatan, but an upright man, one who has courage, who speaks well and says the right things, like other great prophets in the history of Israel. That is why they follow him, at least for as long as they can do so without too much risk or inconvenience. Yet to them he is only a man, and therefore, in times of danger, during his passion, they too abandon him and depart disappointed.

What is striking about these two attitudes is their relevance today. They embody notions that we could easily find on the lips of many men and women in our own time, even if, while essentially identical, they are expressed in different language.

Even today, there are many settings in which the Christian faith is considered absurd, meant for the weak and unintelligent. Settings where other securities are preferred, like technology, money, success, power, or pleasure.

These are contexts where it is not easy to preach the Gospel and bear witness to its truth, where believers are mocked, opposed, despised or at best tolerated and pitied. Yet, precisely for this reason, they are the places where our missionary outreach is desperately needed. A lack of faith is often tragically accompanied by the loss of meaning in life, the neglect of mercy, appalling violations of human dignity, the crisis of the family and so many other wounds that afflict our society.

Today, too, there are many settings in which Jesus, although appreciated as a man, is reduced to a kind of charismatic leader or superman. This is true not only among non-believers but also among many baptized Christians, who thus end up living, at this level, in a state of practical atheism.

This is the world that has been entrusted to us, a world in which, as Pope Francis taught us so many times, we are called to bear witness to our joyful faith in Jesus the Saviour. Therefore, it is essential that we too repeat, with Peter: “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Mt 16:16).

It is essential to do this, first of all, in our personal relationship with the Lord, in our commitment to a daily journey of conversion. Then, to do so as a Church, experiencing together our fidelity to the Lord and bringing the Good News to all (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 1).

I say this first of all to myself, as the Successor of Peter, as I begin my mission as Bishop of Rome and, according to the well-known expression of Saint Ignatius of Antioch, am called to preside in charity over the universal Church (cf. *Letter to the Romans*, Prologue). Saint Ignatius, who was led in chains to this city, the place of his impending sacrifice, wrote to the Christians there: “Then I will truly be a disciple of Jesus Christ, when the world no longer sees my body” (*Letter to the Romans*, IV, 1). Ignatius was speaking about being devoured by wild beasts in the arena – and so it happened – but his words apply more generally to an indispensable commitment for all those in the Church who exercise a ministry of authority. It is to move aside so that Christ may remain, to make oneself small so that he may be known and glorified (cf. Jn 3:30), to spend one-

self to the utmost so that all may have the opportunity to know and love him.

May God grant me this grace, today and always, through the loving intercession of Mary, Mother of the Church.

**3. HOMILY OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV  
IN THE CRYPT OF SAINT PETER'S BASILICA  
Vatican Grottoes  
Sunday, 11 May 2025**

I will begin with a word in English and maybe another one in Italian.

The Gospel that we just heard on this Sunday of the Good Shepherd: My sheep listen to my voice, I know them and they follow me.

I think about the Good Shepherd, especially on this Sunday, which is so significant in Easter time. While we celebrate the beginning of this new mission of the ministry that the Church has called me to, there is no better example than Jesus Christ himself, to whom we give our lives and whom we depend on. Jesus Christ whom we follow, he is the Good Shepherd, and he is the one who gives us life: the way and the truth and the life. So we celebrate with joy this day and we deeply appreciate your presence here.

Today is Mother's Day. I think there is only one mother present: happy Mother's Day! One of the most wonderful expressions of the love of God is the love that is poured out by mothers, especially to their children and grandchildren.

This Sunday is known to be special for several different reasons: one of the first ones I would mention is vocations. During the recent work of the Cardinals, before and after the election of the new Pope, we spoke a lot about vocations in the Church and how important it is that all of us search together. First and foremost by giving [a] good example in our lives, with joy, living the joy of the Gospel, not discouraging others, but rather looking for ways to encourage young people to hear the voice of the Lord and to follow it and to serve in the Church. "I am the Good Shepherd", he tells us.

[In Italian] Now I will add just a word also in Italian, because this mission

we carry forward is no longer to a single diocese, but to all the Church: this universal spirit is important. And we also find it in the first Reading we heard (Acts 13, 14:43-52). Paul and Barnabas go to Antioch; the Jews go first, but they do not want to listen to the voice of the Lord, and so they begin to announce the Gospel to all the world, to the pagans. They go, as we know, on this great mission. Saint Paul comes to Rome, where he also eventually [fulfilled] it. Another example of the witness of a good shepherd. But in that example, there is also a very special invitation to us all. I also said it in a very personal way, what it is to proclaim the Gospel to the whole world.

Take courage! Without fear! Many times in the Gospel Jesus says: “Do not be afraid”. We need to be courageous in the witness we give, with the world and above all with life: giving life, serving, sometimes with great sacrifices in order to live out this very mission.

I saw a little reflection that made me think a lot, because it also comes out in the Gospel. In this sense, someone asked: “When you think about your life, how do you explain where you have arrived?”. The answer they gave in this reflection is in a certain sense mine too, with the verb “to listen”. How important it is to listen! Jesus says, “My sheep listen to my voice”. And I think it is important for all of us to learn how to listen more, to enter into dialogue. First and foremost, with the Lord: always listen to the Word of God. Then also listen to others, to know how to build bridges, to know how to listen without judging, not closing the doors thinking that we have all the truth and no-one else can tell us anything. It is very important to listen to the voice of the Lord, to listen to it, in this dialogue, and to see where the Lord is calling us towards.

Walking together in the Church, let us ask the Lord to give us this grace of being able to listen to His Word, to serve all His people.

**4. HOMILY OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV**  
**Saint Peter's Square**  
**Sunday, 18 May 2025**

Dear Brother Cardinals,  
Brother Bishops and Priests,  
Distinguished Authorities and Members of the Diplomatic Corps.  
Greetings to the pilgrims who have come for the Jubilee of Confraternities!

I greet all of you with a heart full of gratitude at the beginning of the ministry that has been entrusted to me. Saint Augustine wrote: Lord, “you have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you” (Confessions, I: 1,1).

In these days, we have experienced intense emotions. The death of Pope Francis filled our hearts with sadness. In those difficult hours, we felt like the crowds that the Gospel says were “like sheep without a shepherd” (Mt 9:36). Then, on Easter Sunday, we received his final blessing and, in the light of the resurrection, we experienced the days that followed in the certainty that the Lord never abandons his people, but gathers them when they are scattered and guards them “as a shepherd guards his flock” (Jer 31:10).

In this spirit of faith, the College of Cardinals met for the conclave. Coming from different backgrounds and experiences, we placed in God’s hands our desire to elect the new Successor of Peter, the Bishop of Rome, a shepherd capable of preserving the rich heritage of the Christian faith and, at the same time, looking to the future, in order to confront the questions, concerns and challenges of today’s world. Accompanied by your prayers, we could feel the working of the Holy Spirit, who was able to bring us into harmony, like musical instruments, so that our heartstrings could vibrate in a single melody.

I was chosen, without any merit of my own, and now, with fear and trembling, I come to you as a brother, who desires to be the servant of your faith and your joy, walking with you on the path of God’s love, for he wants us all to be united in one family.

Love and unity: these are the two dimensions of the mission entrusted to Peter by Jesus.

We see this in today’s Gospel, which takes us to the Sea of Galilee, where Jesus began the mission he received from the Father: to be a “fisher” of humanity in order to draw it up from the waters of evil and death. Walking along the shore, he had called Peter and the other first disciples to be, like him, “fishers of men”. Now, after the resurrection, it is up to them to carry on this mission, to cast their nets again and again, to bring the hope of the Gospel into the “waters” of the world, to sail the seas of life so that all may experience God’s embrace.

How can Peter carry out this task? The Gospel tells us that it is possible only because his own life was touched by the infinite and unconditional love of God, even in the hour of his failure and denial. For this reason, when Jesus addresses Peter, the Gospel uses the Greek verb *agapáo*, which refers to the love that God has for us, to the offering of himself without reserve and without calculation. Whereas the verb used in Peter's response describes the love of friendship that we have for one another.

Consequently, when Jesus asks Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" (Jn 21:16), he is referring to the love of the Father. It is as if Jesus said to him, "Only if you have known and experienced this love of God, which never fails, will you be able to feed my lambs. Only in the love of God the Father will you be able to love your brothers and sisters with that same 'more', that is, by offering your life for your brothers and sisters."

Peter is thus entrusted with the task of "loving more" and giving his life for the flock. The ministry of Peter is distinguished precisely by this self-sacrificing love, because the Church of Rome presides in charity and its true authority is the charity of Christ. It is never a question of capturing others by force, by religious propaganda or by means of power. Instead, it is always and only a question of loving as Jesus did.

The Apostle Peter himself tells us that Jesus "is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, and has become the cornerstone" (Acts 4:11). Moreover, if the rock is Christ, Peter must shepherd the flock without ever yielding to the temptation to be an autocrat, lording it over those entrusted to him (cf. 1 Pet 5:3). On the contrary, he is called to serve the faith of his brothers and sisters, and to walk alongside them, for all of us are "living stones" (1 Pet 2:5), called through our baptism to build God's house in fraternal communion, in the harmony of the Spirit, in the coexistence of diversity. In the words of Saint Augustine: "The Church consists of all those who are in harmony with their brothers and sisters and who love their neighbour" (Serm. 359,9).

Brothers and sisters, I would like that our first great desire be for a united Church, a sign of unity and communion, which becomes a leaven for a reconciled world.

In this our time, we still see too much discord, too many wounds caused by hatred, violence, prejudice, the fear of difference, and an economic paradigm that exploits the Earth's resources and marginalises the poorest. For our part, we want to be a small leaven of unity, communion and fraternity

within the world. We want to say to the world, with humility and joy: Look to Christ! Come closer to him! Welcome his word that enlightens and consoles! Listen to his offer of love and become his one family: in the one Christ, we are one. This is the path to follow together, among ourselves but also with our sister Christian churches, with those who follow other religious paths, with those who are searching for God, with all women and men of good will, in order to build a new world where peace reigns!

This is the missionary spirit that must animate us; not closing ourselves off in our small groups, nor feeling superior to the world. We are called to offer God's love to everyone, in order to achieve that unity which does not cancel out differences but values the personal history of each person and the social and religious culture of every people.

Brothers and sisters, this is the hour for love! The heart of the Gospel is the love of God that makes us brothers and sisters. With my predecessor Leo XIII, we can ask ourselves today: If this criterion "were to prevail in the world, would not every conflict cease and peace return?" (Rerum Novarum, 20).

With the light and the strength of the Holy Spirit, let us build a Church founded on God's love, a sign of unity, a missionary Church that opens its arms to the world, proclaims the word, allows itself to be made "restless" by history, and becomes a leaven of harmony for humanity.

Together, as one people, as brothers and sisters, let us walk towards God and love one another.

**5. HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIV**  
**Basilica of Saint Paul outside the Walls**  
**Tuesday, 20 May 2025**

The passage of Scripture that we have just heard is the opening of a beautiful letter written by Saint Paul to the Christians of Rome. Its message revolves around three great themes: grace, faith and justification. As we entrust the beginning of this new Pontificate to the intercession of the Apostle of the Gentiles, let us reflect together on that message.

Saint Paul starts by saying that he received from God the grace of his vocation (cf. Rom 1:5). He acknowledges, in other words, that his en-

counter with Christ and his own ministry were the fruit of God's prior love, which called him to a new life while he was still far from the Gospel and persecuting the Church. Saint Augustine, who was also a convert, spoke of the same experience in these words: "How can we choose, unless we have first been chosen? We cannot love, unless someone has loved us first" (Serm. 34, 2). At the root of every vocation, God is present, in his mercy and his goodness, as generous as that of a mother (cf. Is 66:11-13) who nourishes her child with her own body for as long as the child is unable to feed itself (cf. SAINT AUGUSTINE, Enn. in Ps. 130, 9).

In the same passage, Paul also speaks of "the obedience of faith" (Rom 1:5), and here too he shares his own experience. When the Lord appeared to him on the road to Damascus (cf. Acts 9:1-30), he did not take away his freedom, but gave him the opportunity to make a decision, to choose an obedience that would prove costly and entail interior and exterior struggles, which Paul proved willing to face. Salvation does not come about by magic, but by a mysterious interplay of grace and faith, of God's prevenient love and of our trusting and free acceptance (cf. 2 Tim 1:12).

As we thank the Lord for the calling that changed Saul's life, let us ask him to enable us to respond in the same way to his grace, and to become, ourselves, witnesses of the love "poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us" (Rom 5:5). Let us ask the Lord for the grace to cultivate and spread his charity, and to become true neighbours to one another (cf. FRANCIS, Homily at Second Vespers of the Solemnity of the Conversion of Saint Paul, 25 January 2024). Let us compete in showing the love that, following his encounter with Christ, drove the former persecutor to become "all things to all people" (cf. 1 Cor 9:19-23), even to the point of martyrdom. In this way, for us as for Paul, the weakness of the flesh will show the power of faith in God that brings justification (cf. Rom 5:1-5).

For centuries, this Basilica has been entrusted to the care of a Benedictine community. How can we fail to mention, then, as we speak of love as the source and driving force of the preaching of the Gospel, the insistent appeals of Saint Benedict, in his Rule, to fraternal charity in the monastery and hospitality towards all (Rule, cc. LIII; LXIII).

I would like to conclude, though, by recalling the words that, more than a thousand years later, another Benedict, Pope Benedict XVI, addressed to young people: "Dear friends," he said, "God loves us. This is the great truth of our life; it is what makes everything else meaningful." Indeed,

“our life originates as part of a loving plan of God,” and faith leads us to “open our hearts to this mystery of love and to live as men and women conscious of being loved by God” (Homily at the Prayer Vigil with Young People, Madrid, 20 August 2011).

Here we see, in all its simplicity and uniqueness, the basis of every mission, including my own mission as the Successor of Peter and the heir to Paul’s apostolic zeal. May the Lord grant me the grace to respond faithfully to his call.

**6. HOMILY OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV**  
**Lateran Basilica**  
**6th Sunday in the Time of Easter, 25 May 2025**

I offer a cordial greeting to the Cardinals present, and particularly to the Cardinal Vicar, the auxiliary bishops, all the bishops and the priests – parish priests, parochial vicars and all those who in various ways cooperate in the pastoral care of our communities. My greeting also goes to the deacons, the men and women religious, the civil authorities and all of you, the dear lay faithful.

The Church of Rome is heir to a great history, grounded in the witness of Peter, Paul and countless martyrs, and it has a unique mission, as we see from the inscription on the façade of this Cathedral: to be Mater omnium Ecclesiarum, Mother of all the Churches.

Pope Francis frequently encouraged us to reflect on the maternal dimension of the Church (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, 46-49, 139-141; Catechesis, 13 January 2016) and her defining qualities of tenderness, self-sacrifice and the capacity to listen. Those qualities enable her not only to assist others but often to anticipate their needs and expectations before they are even expressed. We hope that those qualities will be increasingly present in the people of God everywhere, including here, in our great diocesan family: in the faithful, in pastors, and, first of all, in myself. The readings we have heard can help us to reflect on these qualities.

The Acts of the Apostles (cf. 15:1-2, 22-29) in particular describe how the early Christian community faced the challenge of opening to the pagan world in its preaching of the Gospel. This was no easy matter; it called

for much patience and mutual listening. This was the case in the community in Antioch, where the brethren, through dialogue – and even disagreements – resolved the question together. Paul and Barnabas then went up to Jerusalem. They did not settle the question on their own: they wanted to be in communion with the Mother Church and so they went there with humility.

In Jerusalem, they found Peter and the Apostles, who were prepared to listen to them. This was the beginning of a dialogue that, in the end, led to the right decision. Recognizing the difficulties of the new converts, they agreed not to impose excessive burdens on them, but rather to insist only on what was essential (cf. Acts 15:28-29). In this way, what might have seemed a problem became for everyone an opportunity for reflection and growth.

We see this in the words used by the brethren in Jerusalem to communicate their decisions to those in Antioch. They wrote: “For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us” (cf. Acts 15:28). In other words, they emphasized that the most important part of the entire event was listening to God’s voice, which made everything else possible. In this way, they remind us that communion is built primarily “on our knees,” through prayer and constant commitment to conversion. For only in this way can each of us hear within the voice of the Spirit crying out: “Abba! Father!” (Gal 4:6) and then, as a result, listen to and understand others as our brothers and sisters.

The Gospel reaffirms this point (cf. Jn 14:23-29). It assures us that we are not alone in making our decisions in life. The Spirit sustains us and shows us the way to follow, “teaching” us and “reminding” us of all that Jesus said to us (cf. Jn 14:26).

First, the Spirit teaches us the Lord’s words by impressing them deep within us, written, as the biblical image would have it, no longer on tablets of stone but in our hearts (cf. Jer 31:33). This gift helps us grow and become “a letter of Christ” (cf. 2 Cor 3:3) for one another. Naturally, the more we let ourselves be convinced and transformed by the Gospel — allowing the power of the Spirit to purify our heart, to make our words straightforward, our desires honest and clear, and our actions generous — the more capable we are of proclaiming its message.

Here, the other verb comes into play: we remember, that is, we reflect in our hearts upon what we have experienced and learned, in order to understand more fully its meaning and to savour its beauty.

I think in this regard of the challenging process of listening that the Diocese of Rome has undertaken in these years, a process carried out at various levels: listening to the world around us to respond to its challenges, and listening within our communities to understand needs and to propose sage and prophetic initiatives of evangelization and charity. This has been a challenging, ongoing journey meant to embrace a very rich and complex reality. Yet it is worthy of the history of this local Church, which has shown, time and again, that it is able to “think big”, unafraid to embark on bold projects and to confront new and challenging scenarios.

This is evident in the great efforts and many initiatives that the Diocese has made to welcome and provide for the needs of pilgrims during the present Jubilee. Thank you! These have made the city of Rome appear to visitors, some of whom have travelled from far away, as a wide, open and welcoming home, and above all as a place of deep faith.

For my part, I would like to express my firm desire to contribute to this great ongoing process by listening to everyone as much as possible, in order to learn, understand and decide things together, as Saint Augustine would say, “as a Christian with you and a Bishop for you” (cf. Sermon 340, 1). I would also ask you to support me in prayer and charity, mindful of the words of Saint Leo the Great: “All the good we do in the exercise of our ministry is the work of Christ and not our own, for we can do nothing without him. Yet we glory in him, from whom all the effectiveness of our work is derived” (Sermon 5, De Natali Ipsi, 4).

Let me conclude by adding the words with which Blessed John Paul I, whose joyful and serene face had already earned him the nickname of “the smiling Pope,” greeted his new diocesan family on 23 September 1978. “Saint Pius X,” he said, “upon entering Venice as patriarch, exclaimed in Saint Mark’s: ‘What would become of me, dear Venetians, if I did not love you?’ I would say something similar to you Romans: I assure you that I love you, that I desire only to enter into your service and to place my own poor abilities, the little I have and am, at the service of all” (Homily for the Taking of Possession of the Chair of the Bishop of Rome).

I too express my affection for you and my desire to share with you, on our journey together, our joys and sorrows, our struggles and hopes. I too offer you “the little I have and am,” entrusting it to the intercession

of Saints Peter and Paul and of all those other brothers and sisters of ours whose holiness has illuminated the history of this Church and the streets of this city. May the Virgin Mary accompany us and intercede for us.

Pope Leo XIV's words spoken from the central Loggia of the Basilica of St. John Lateran for the Blessing of the city of Rome at the conclusion of the Eucharistic Celebration.

Peace be with you!

Dear brothers and sisters, community of Rome, it gives me great pleasure to be here with you this evening, in this liturgical act in which we have celebrated my inauguration as your new Bishop of Rome. Thank you all!

Let us live our faith, especially during this Jubilee Year, in search of hope; but seeking to be ourselves the witness that offers hope to the world. A world that suffers a great deal of pain due to wars, violence and poverty! But the Lord asks us as Christians always to be this living witness. To live our faith, feeling in our heart that Jesus Christ is present and to know that He always accompanies us on our journey.

Thank you for walking together! Let us all walk together! Always count on me, as a Christian with you and Bishop for you. Thank you all!

Good evening to you all! Let us live with this joy, always. Thank you.

**7. HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS LEO XIV**  
**Saint Peter's Basilica**  
**Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary -**  
**Saturday, 31 May 2025**

ADear brothers and sisters,

Today is a day of great joy for the Church, for each of you, ordination candidates, for your families and friends and for your travelling companions during your years of formation. As the Rite of Ordination highlights in several passages, the relationship between what we are celebrating today and the People of God is fundamental. The depth, breadth and even duration of the divine joy that we now share are directly proportional to the bonds that exist and will grow between you, candidates, and the

people from whom you hail, who you continue to be a part of and to whom you will be sent. I will linger on this aspect, bearing in mind that priests' identities are rooted in the union with Christ, the Eternal and High priest.

We are the People of God. The Second Vatican Council made this awareness clearer, almost anticipating a time in which affiliations would grow weaker, and the awareness of God more rarefied. You bear witness to the fact that God has not grown tired of bringing his children together, diverse though they may be, and of forming them into a dynamic unity. It is not an impulsive action, but rather the gentle breeze that restored hope to the prophet Elijah when he was in despair (cf. 1 Kings 19:12). God's joy is not loud, but it truly changes history and brings us closer to one another. An icon of this mystery is the Visitation, which the Church contemplates on the last day of May. The Magnificat, the song of a people visited by grace, emerges from the encounter between the Virgin Mary and her cousin Elizabeth.

The readings we have just read also help us interpret what is happening among us. Firstly, in the Gospel, Jesus does not appear crushed by his imminent death, nor by the bonds that were broken or left incomplete. On the contrary, the Holy Spirit strengthens these threatened bonds. In prayer, they become stronger than death. Instead of thinking about his own personal destiny, Jesus puts the bonds that he built 'down here' into the Father's hands. We are part of them! Indeed, the Gospel came to us through these relationships — bonds that the world can wear down, but not destroy.

Dear ordinands, imitate Jesus! Being of God — servants of God, people of God — connects us to the earth: not to an ideal world, but to the real one. Like Jesus, you meet real people whom the Father places on your path. Consecrate yourselves to them, without separating, isolating or turning the gift you received into a privilege. Pope Francis warned us about this many times because self-centredness extinguishes the fire of the missionary spirit.

The Church is outgoing like the life, passion, death and resurrection of Jesus. In every Eucharist you make his words your own: it is "for you and for all". No-one has ever seen God. He turned to us; he came out of himself. The Son became the exegesis, the living story. And he gave us the power to become children of God. Do not seek, let us not seek, any other power!

May the gesture of laying on of the hands, with which Jesus welcomed children and healed the sick, renew the liberating power of his messianic ministry, within you. In the Acts of the Apostles, that gesture we will soon repeat is the invocation of the Spirit, creator. In this way, the Kingdom of God now unites your personal freedoms, that are ready to go beyond, engaging your intelligence and your youthful strength in the jubilee mission that Jesus entrusted to his Church.

In his greeting to the elders of the community of Ephesus, which we heard in the First Reading, Paul conveys the secret of every mission: “The Holy Spirit has made you guardians” (Acts 20:28). Not masters, but guardians. The mission is Jesus. He is Risen — thus, he is living and he precedes us. None of us is called to substitute him. The day of the Ascension teaches us about his invisible presence. He trusts us, he makes room for us; he even went so far as to say: “It is better for you that I go” (Jn 16:7). By involving you in the mission, dear ordinands, we bishops make room for you too. And you make room for the faithful and for every creature to whom the Risen One is close and in whom he loves to visit and surprise us. The People of God are more numerous than we see. Let us not define their boundaries.

I would like to highlight another part of the passage from Saint Paul, from his moving farewell discourse. In fact it comes before all the other words. He can say, “You know how I lived among you the whole time” (Acts 20:18). Let us keep this expression clearly in our hearts and minds! “You know how I lived”: the transparency of life. Lives that are known, legible lives, credible lives! We live among the People of God, so that we may stand before them as credible witnesses.

Together, then, we will rebuild the credibility of a wounded Church, sent to a wounded humanity, within a wounded creation. We are not yet perfect, but it is necessary that we be credible. The Risen Jesus shows us his wounds and, although they are a sign of humanity’s rejection, he forgives us and sends us on our way. Let us not forget this! He breathes on us today too. (cf. Jn 20:22), and he makes us ministers of hope. “From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view” (2 Cor 5:16). Everything that seems lost and broken to us, now appears in the sign of reconciliation.

“For the love of Christ controls us”, dear brothers and sisters! It is a ‘control’ that is liberating and enables us to not control anyone. To liberate,

not to possess. We are God's. There is no greater wealth to be appreciated and shared. It is the only wealth that, when shared, is multiplied. Together we want to bring it to the world that God loved so much that he gave his only Son (cf. Jn 3:16).

Thus, the life given by these brothers, who will soon be ordained priests, is full of meaning. We thank them and we thank God who called them to the service of an all-priestly people. Indeed, together we bridge heaven and earth. This shared priesthood that lifts up the lowly, binds generations and allows us to be called blessed (cf. Lk 1:48, 52), (cf. Lk 1:48, 52), shines forth in Mary, Mother of the Church. May she, Our Lady of Trust and Mother of Hope, intercede for us.

**8. HOMILY OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV**  
**St Peter's Square**  
**7th Sunday of Easter - Sunday, 1 June 2025**

The Gospel we have just heard shows us Jesus, at the Last Supper, praying on our behalf (cf. Jn 17:20). The Word of God, made man, as he nears the end of his earthly life, thinks of us, his brothers and sisters, and becomes a blessing, a prayer of petition and praise to the Father, in the power of the Holy Spirit. As we ourselves, full of wonder and trust, enter into Jesus' prayer, we become, thanks to his love, part of a great plan that concerns all of humanity. Christ prays that we may "all be one" (v. 21). This is the greatest good that we can desire, for this universal union brings about among his creatures the eternal communion of love that is God himself: the Father who gives life, the Son who receives it and the Spirit who shares it.

The Lord does not want us, in this unity, to be a nameless and faceless crowd. He wants us to be one: "As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us" (v. 21). The unity for which Jesus prays is thus a communion grounded in the same love with which God loves, which brings life and salvation into the world. As such, it is firstly a gift that Jesus comes to bring. From his human heart, the Son of God prays to the Father in these words: "I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me" (v. 23).

Let us listen with amazement to these words. Jesus is telling us that God

loves us as he loves himself. The Father does not love us any less than he loves his only-begotten Son. In other words, with an infinite love. God does not love less, because he loves first, from the very beginning! Christ himself bears witness to this when he says to the Father: “You loved me before the foundation of the world” (v. 24). And so it is: in his mercy, God has always desired to draw all people to himself. It is his life, bestowed upon us in Christ, that makes us one, uniting us with one another.

Listening to this Gospel today, during the Jubilee of Families, Children, Grandparents and the Elderly, fills us with joy. Dear friends, we received life before we ever desired it. As Pope Francis said: “all of us are sons and daughters, but none of us chose to be born” (Angelus, 1 January 2025). Not only that. As soon as we were born, we needed others in order to live; left to ourselves, we would not have survived. Someone else saved us by caring for us in body and spirit. All of us are alive today thanks to a relationship, a free and freeing relationship of human kindness and mutual care.

That human kindness is sometimes betrayed. As for example, whenever freedom is invoked not to give life, but to take it away, not to help, but to hurt. Yet even in the face of the evil that opposes and takes life, Jesus continues to pray to the Father for us. His prayer acts as a balm for our wounds; it speaks to us of forgiveness and reconciliation. That prayer makes fully meaningful our experience of love for one another as parents, grandparents, sons and daughters. That is what we want to proclaim to the world: we are here in order to be “one” as the Lord wants us to be “one,” in our families and in those places where we live, work and study. Different, yet one; many, yet one; always, in every situation and at every stage of life.

Dear friends, if we love one another in this way, grounded in Christ, who is “the Alpha and the Omega,” “the beginning and the end” (cf. Rev 22:13), we will be a sign of peace for everyone, in society and the world. Let us not forget: families are the cradle of the future of humanity.

In recent decades, we have received a sign that fills us with joy but also makes us think. It is the fact that several spouses have been beatified and canonized, not separately, but as married couples. I think of Louis and Zélie Martin, the parents of Saint Therese of the Child Jesus; and of Blessed Luigi and Maria Beltrame Quattrocchi, who raised a family in Rome in the last century. And let us not forget the Ulma family from Poland: parents and children, united in love and martyrdom. I said that this

is a sign that makes us think. By pointing to them as exemplary witnesses of married life, the Church tells us that today's world needs the marriage covenant in order to know and accept God's love and to defeat, thanks to its unifying and reconciling power, the forces that break down relationships and societies.

For this reason, with a heart filled with gratitude and hope, I would remind all married couples that marriage is not an ideal but the measure of true love between a man and a woman: a love that is total, faithful and fruitful (cf. SAINT PAUL VI, *Humanae Vitae*, 9). This love makes you one flesh and enables you, in the image of God, to bestow the gift of life.

I encourage you, then, to be examples of integrity to your children, acting as you want them to act, educating them in freedom through obedience, always seeing the good in them and finding ways to nurture it. And you, dear children, show gratitude to your parents. To say "thank you" each day for the gift of life and for all that comes with it is the first way to honour your father and your mother (cf. Ex 20:12). Finally, dear grandparents and elderly people, I recommend that you watch over your loved ones with wisdom and compassion, and with the humility and patience that come with age. In the family, faith is handed on together with life, generation after generation. It is shared like food at the family table and like the love in our hearts. In this way, families become privileged places in which to encounter Jesus, who loves us and desires our good, always.

Let me add one last thing. The prayer of the Son of God, which gives us hope on our journey, also reminds us that one day we will all be *uno unum* (cf. Saint Augustine, *Sermo super Ps. 127*): one in the one Saviour, embraced by the eternal love of God. Not only us, but also our fathers, mothers, grandmothers, grandfathers, brothers, sisters and children who have already gone before us into the light of his eternal Pasch, and whose presence we feel here, together with us, in this moment of celebration.

**9.HOMILY OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV**  
**St. Peter's Square**  
**Saturday, 7 June 2025**

Dear sisters and brothers,

The Creator Spirit, whom we invoked in the hymn – *Veni Creator Spiriti-*

tus – is the Spirit who descended upon Jesus as the quiet driving force of his mission: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me” (Lk 4:18). When we ask the Spirit to enlighten our minds, to multiply our languages, to awaken our senses, to instill love, to strengthen our bodies and to grant us peace, we become open to God’s Kingdom. This is, according to the Gospel, the meaning of conversion. It is a “turning toward” the Kingdom already close at hand.

In Jesus we see, and from Jesus we hear, how everything changes because God is king, God is close to us. On this vigil of Pentecost, we are deeply aware of this closeness of God, of his Spirit who joins our lives to that of Jesus. We are caught up in the new things that God brings about, so that his desire for the fullness of life will prevail over the power of death.

“He has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord” (Lk 4:18-19). Here tonight, we sense the fragrance of the chrism with which our foreheads have been anointed. Dear brothers and sisters, Baptism and Confirmation united us to Jesus’ mission of making all things new, to the Kingdom of God. Just as love enables us to sense the presence of a loved one, so tonight we sense in one another the fragrance of Christ. This is a mystery; it amazes us and it leads us to reflect.

At Pentecost, Mary, the Apostles, and the disciples with them received a Spirit of unity, which forever grounded in the one Lord Jesus Christ all their diversity. Theirs were not multiple missions, but a single mission. They were no longer introverted and quarrelling with one another, but outgoing and radiant with joy. Saint Peter’s Square, with its wide-open and welcoming embrace, magnificently expresses the communion of the Church that each of you has experienced in your various associations and communities, many of which are the fruit of the Second Vatican Council.

On the evening of my election, moved as I looked out at the people of God gathered here, I spoke of “synodality,” a word that aptly expresses how the Spirit shapes the Church. That word begins with the Greek word *syn* – meaning “with” – which speaks of the secret of God’s life. God is not solitary. God, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is a “with” in himself, and God with us. At the same time, the word “synodality” speaks to us of a road ahead – *hodós* – for where there is the Spirit, there is movement,

a journey to be made. We are a people on the move. This does not set us apart but unites us to humanity like the yeast in a mass of dough, which causes it to rise. The year of the Lord's grace, reflected in the current Jubilee, has this fermentation within it. In a divided and troubled world, the Holy Spirit teaches us to walk together in unity. The earth will rest, justice will prevail, the poor will rejoice and peace will return, once we no longer act as predators but as pilgrims. No longer each of us for ourselves, but walking alongside one another. Not greedily exploiting this world, but cultivating it and protecting it, as the Encyclical *Laudato Si'* has taught us.

Dear friends, God created the world so that we might all live as one. "Synodality" is the ecclesial name for this. It demands that we each recognize our own poverty and our riches, that we feel part of a greater whole, apart from which everything withers, even the most original and unique of charisms. Think about it. All creation exists solely in the form of coexistence, sometimes dangerous, yet always interconnected (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 16; 117). And what we call "history" only takes place as coexistence, living together, however contentiously, but always together. The opposite is lethal, but sadly, we are witnessing this daily. May your meetings and your communities, then, be training grounds of fraternity and sharing, not merely meeting places, but centres of spirituality. The Spirit of Jesus changes the world because he changes hearts. The Spirit inspires the contemplative dimension of life that rejects self-assertion, complaining, rivalry and the temptation to control consciences and resources. The Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom (cf. 2 Cor 3:17). An authentic spirituality thus commits us to integral human development, to making Jesus' words a reality in our lives. When this happens, there is always joy: joy and hope.

Evangelization, dear brothers and sisters, is not our attempt to conquer the world, but the infinite grace that radiates from lives transformed by the Kingdom of God. It is the way of the Beatitudes, a path that we tread together, between the "already" and the "not yet," hungering and thirsting for justice, poor in spirit, merciful, meek, pure of heart, men and women of peace. Jesus himself chose this path: to follow it, we have no need of powerful patrons, worldly compromises, or emotional strategies. Evangelization is always God's work. If at times it takes place through us, it is thanks to the bonds that it makes possible. So be deeply attached to each of the particular Churches and parish communities in which you cultivate and exercise your charisms. Together with the bishops and in cooperation with all the other members of the

Body of Christ, all of us will then work together harmoniously as one. The challenges facing humanity will be less frightening, the future will be less dark and discernment will be less complicated... if together we obey the Holy Spirit! May Mary, Queen of the Apostles and Mother of the Church, intercede for us.

**10.HOMILY OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV**  
**St. Peter's Square**  
**Sunday, 8 June 2025**

Dear brothers and sisters,

“The day has dawned upon us when..., glorified by his ascension into heaven following his resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ sent the Holy Spirit” (Saint Augustine, Serm. 271, 1). Today, too, what took place in the Upper Room takes place anew in our midst. Like a mighty wind that overtakes us, like a crash that startles us, like a fire that illuminates us, the gift of the Holy Spirit descends upon us (cf. Acts 2:1-11).

As we heard in the first reading, the Spirit accomplished something extraordinary in the lives of the Apostles. Following Jesus' death, they had retreated behind closed doors, in fear and sadness. Now they receive a new way of seeing things, an interior understanding that helps them to interpret the events that occurred and to experience intimately the presence of the Risen Lord. The Holy Spirit overcomes their fear, shatters their inner chains, heals their wounds, anoints them with strength and grants them the courage to go out to all and to proclaim God's mighty works.

The reading from the Acts of the Apostles tells us that in Jerusalem at that time there was a multitude of people from various backgrounds, yet “each one heard them speaking in his own native tongue” (v. 6). In a word, at Pentecost, the doors of the Upper Room were opened because the Spirit opens borders. As Benedict XVI explained: “The Holy Spirit bestows understanding. The Spirit overcomes the ‘breach’ that began in Babel, the confusion of mind and heart that sets us one against the other. The Spirit opens borders... The Church must always become anew what she already is. She must open the borders between peoples and break down the barriers between class and race. In her, there cannot be those who are neglected or disdained. In the Church there are only free men and women, brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ” (Homily for Pentecost, 15 May 2005). Here we have an eloquent image of Pentecost, one that I would like to pause for a moment and reflect upon with you.

The Spirit opens borders, first of all, in our hearts. He is the Gift that opens our lives to love. His presence breaks down our hardness of heart, our narrowness of mind, our selfishness, the fears that enchain us and the narcissism that makes us think only of ourselves. The Holy Spirit comes to challenge us, to make us confront the possibility that our lives are shrivelling up, trapped in the vortex of individualism. Sadly, oddly enough, in a world of burgeoning “social” media, we risk being ever more alone. Constantly connected, yet incapable of “networking”. Always immersed in a crowd, yet confused and solitary travellers.

The Spirit of God allows us to find a new way of approaching and experiencing life. He puts us in touch with our inmost self, beneath all the masks we wear. He leads us to an encounter with the Lord by teaching us to experience the joy that is his gift. He convinces us, as we just heard in Jesus’ words, that only by abiding in love, will we receive the strength to remain faithful to his word and to let it transform us. The Spirit opens our interior borders, so that our lives can become places of welcome and refreshment.

The Spirit also opens borders in our relationship with others. Jesus tells us that this Gift is the love between him and the Father that comes to dwell within us. We then become capable of opening our hearts to our brothers and sisters, overcoming our rigidity, moving beyond our fear of those who are different, and mastering the passions that stir within. The Spirit also transforms those deeper, hidden dangers that disturb our relationships, like suspicion, prejudice or the desire to manipulate others. I think too, with great pain, of those cases where relationships are marked by an unhealthy desire for domination, an attitude that often leads to violence, as is shown, tragically, by numerous recent cases of femicide.

The Holy Spirit, on the other hand, brings to maturity within us the fruits that enable us to cultivate good and healthy relationships: “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control” (Gal 5:22). In this way, the Spirit broadens the borders of our relationships and opens us to the joy of fraternity. This is also a critical yardstick for the Church. For we are truly the Church of the Risen Lord and disciples of Pentecost if there are no borders or divisions among us; if we are able to dialogue and accept one another in the Church, and to reconcile our diversities; and if, as Church, we become a welcoming and hospitable place for all. Finally, the Spirit also opens borders between

peoples. At Pentecost, the Apostles spoke the languages of those they met, and the confusion of Babel was finally resolved by the harmony brought about by the Spirit. Whenever God's "breath" unites our hearts and makes us view others as our brothers and sisters, differences no longer become an occasion for division and conflict but rather a shared patrimony from which we can all draw, and which sets us all on journey together, in fraternity.

The Spirit breaks down barriers and tears down the walls of indifference and hatred because he "teaches us all things" and "reminds us of Jesus' words" (cf. Jn 14:26). He teaches us, reminds us, and writes in our hearts before all else the commandment of love that the Lord has made the center and summit of everything. Where there is love, there is no room for prejudice, for "security" zones separating us from our neighbors, for the exclusionary mindset that, tragically, we now see emerging also in political nationalisms.

It was on the feast of Pentecost that Pope Francis observed: "In our world today, there is so much discord, such great division. We are all 'connected', yet find ourselves disconnected from one another, anesthetized by indifference and overwhelmed by solitude" (Homily, 28 May 2023). The wars plaguing our world are a tragic sign of this. Let us invoke the Spirit of love and peace, that he may open borders, break down walls, dispel hatred and help us to live as children of our one Father who is in heaven.

Brothers and sisters, Pentecost renews the Church and the world! May the strong wind of the Spirit come upon us and within us, open the borders of our hearts, grant us the grace of encounter with God, enlarge the horizons of our love and sustain our efforts to build a world in which peace reigns. May Mary Most Holy, Woman of Pentecost, Virgin visited by the Spirit, Mother full of grace, accompany us and intercede for us.

**11. HOMILY OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV**  
**Saint Peter's Basilica Blessed Virgin Mary Mother of the Church**  
**Monday, 9 June 2025**

Dear sisters and brothers,

Today we have the joy and grace of celebrating the Jubilee of the Holy See on the liturgical feast day of Mary, Mother of the Church. This happy coincidence is a source of light and inner inspiration in the Holy Spirit,

who yesterday, on Pentecost, poured himself out abundantly upon the people of God. It is in this spiritual setting that we are experiencing a special day; first with the meditation we have heard and now, at the table of the Word and the Eucharist.

The Word of God in this celebration helps us to understand the mystery of the Church and, within it, of the Holy See, in the light of the two biblical images inspired by the Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles (1:12-14) and in the Gospel of John (19:25-34).

Let us begin with the fundamental account, which is the story of Jesus' death. John, the only one of the Twelve present at Calvary, saw and testified that beneath the cross stood Jesus' mother together with the other women (cf. Jn 19:25). And he heard with his own ears the last words of the Master, among which were these: "Woman, here is your son!" and then, turning to him, "Here is your mother!" (Jn 19:26-27).

Mary's motherhood through the mystery of the Cross took an unimaginable leap: the mother of Jesus became the new Eve, the source of new and eternal life for every person who comes into the world, because her Son associated her with his redemptive death. The theme of fruitfulness is clearly present in this liturgy. The opening prayer immediately highlighted this by asking the Father that the Church, sustained by the love of Christ, "may be more fruitful day by day." (Collect)

The fruitfulness of the Church is the same fruitfulness as Mary's; it is realized in the lives of her members to the extent that they relive, "in miniature," what the Mother lived, namely, they love according to the love of Jesus. All the fruitfulness of the Church and of the Holy See depends on the Cross of Christ. Otherwise, it is only appearance, if not worse. A great contemporary theologian wrote: "If the Church is the tree that grew from the tiny mustard seed of the cross, this tree is destined to produce mustard seeds in turn, and therefore fruits that repeat the shape of the cross, because it is precisely to the cross that they owe their existence" (H.U. von Balthasar, *Cordula overosia il caso serio*, Brescia 1969, 45-46).

In the Collect, we also prayed that the Church may exult "in the holiness of her children." In fact, the fruitfulness of Mary and of the Church are inextricably linked to their holiness, which is their conformity to Christ. The Holy See is holy as the Church is holy, in her original core, in the very fabric of her being. The Apostolic See thus preserves the holiness of its roots while being preserved by them. But it is no less true that it

also lives in the holiness of each of its members. Therefore, the best way to serve the Holy See is to strive for holiness, each according to his or her particular state of life and the work entrusted to him or her.

For example, a priest who personally carries a heavy cross because of his ministry, yet every day goes to the office and tries to do his job to the best of his ability with love and faith, this priest participates and contributes to the fruitfulness of the Church. Similarly, a father or mother of a family who lives in a difficult situation at home, with a child who is cause for concern or a sick parent, and continues his or her work with commitment, that man or woman are fruitful with the fruitfulness of Mary and of the Church.

Let us now turn to the second image, the one described by Saint Luke at the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles, which depicts the mother of Jesus together with the Apostles and disciples in the Upper Room (1:12-14). It presents Mary's motherhood towards the nascent Church, an "archetypal" motherhood that remains relevant in every time and place. It is always and above all the fruit of the Paschal Mystery, of the gift of the Crucified and Risen Lord.

The Holy Spirit, who descends with power upon the first community, is the same Spirit that Jesus bestowed with his last breath (cf. Jn 19:30). This biblical image is inseparable from the first. The fruitfulness of the Church is always linked to the grace that flowed from the pierced heart of Jesus, together with blood and water, symbolizing the sacraments (cf. Jn 19:34).

In the Upper Room, thanks to the maternal mission she received at the foot of the cross, Mary is at the service of the nascent community: she is the living memory of Jesus and, as such, she is the center of attention that harmonizes differences and ensures the unity of the disciples' prayer.

In this text too, the apostles are listed by name and, as always, Peter is the first (cf. v. 13). But he himself, in truth, is the first to be supported by Mary in his ministry. In the same way, Mother Church supports the ministry of Peter's successors with the Marian charism. The Holy See experiences in a very special way the coexistence of the two poles; the Marian and the Petrine. It is precisely the Marian pole, with its motherhood, gift of Christ and of the Spirit, that ensures the fruitfulness and holiness of the Petrine pole.

Dear friends, let us praise God for his Word, the lamp that guides our steps, even in our daily life at the service of the Holy See. Enlightened by his Word, let us renew our prayer: Grant, O Father, that your Church, sustained by the love of Christ, may be ever more fruitful in the Spirit, exult in the holiness of her children, and draw to her embrace all the whole human family (cf. Collect in Italian Missal). Amen.

**12. HOMILY OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV**  
**Saint Peter's Basilica**  
**Sunday, 15 June 2025**

Dear brothers and sisters,

In the first reading we heard these words: “Thus says the wisdom of God: The Lord possessed me, the beginning of his ways, the forerunner of his prodigies of long ago ... When the Lord established the heavens I was there ... then was I beside him as his craftsman, and I was his delight day by day, playing before him all the while, playing on the surface of his earth; and I found delight in the human race” (Prov 8: 22, 27, 30-31) For Saint Augustine, the Trinity and wisdom are intimately connected. Divine wisdom is revealed in the Most Holy Trinity, and wisdom always leads us to truth.

While we are celebrating today the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity, we are also marking the Jubilee of Sport. This combination of Trinity and Sport is somewhat unusual, yet the juxtaposition is not inappropriate. Every good and worthwhile human activity is in some way a reflection of God's infinite beauty, and sport is certainly one of these. For God is not immobile and closed in on himself, but activity, communion, a dynamic relationship between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, which opens up to humanity and to the world. Theologians speak of perichoresis: the life of God is a kind of “dance”: a dance of mutual love.

This dynamism of God's inner life gives birth to life. We were created by a God who finds joy in giving existence to his creatures, who “delights” in our world, as the we heard in the first reading (cf. Prov 8:30-31). Some Fathers of the Church go so far as to speak of a *Deus ludens*, a God who “plays” (cf. SAINT SALONIUS OF GENEVA, *In Parabolis Salomonis expositio mystica*; SAINT GREGORY NAZIANZEN, *Carmina*, I, 2, 589). Sport can thus help us to encounter the Triune God, because it challenges us to relate to others and with others, not only outwardly but also, and

above all, interiorly. Otherwise, sport becomes nothing more than an empty competition of inflated egos.

Here in Italy, spectators at sporting events often cheer athletes on by shouting out, “Dai!” (Come one!). The Italian word, however, means, literally, “Give!” This can give us cause to reflect. Sports are not only about physical achievements, however extraordinary, but also about giving of ourselves, putting ourselves “in play”. It is about giving of ourselves for others – for our personal improvement, for our athletic supporters, for our loved ones, our coaches and colleagues, for the greater public, and even for our opponents. Being a “good sport” is more important than winning or not. Saint John Paul II – himself, as we know, a sportsman – put it this way: “Sport is joy of life, a game, a celebration. As such, it must be fostered... by recovering its sheer gratuity, its ability to forge bonds of friendship, to encourage dialogue and openness towards others... quite apart from the harsh laws of production and consumption and all other purely utilitarian and hedonistic approaches to life” (Homily for the Jubilee of Sports, 12 April 1984).

From this standpoint, let us reflect on three particular things that make sport, nowadays, a precious means for training in human and Christian virtues.

First, in a society marked by solitude, where radical individualism has shifted the emphasis from “us” to “me”, resulting in a deficit of real concern for others, sport – especially team sports – teaches the value of cooperating, working together and sharing. These, as we said, are at the very heart of God’s own life (cf. Jn 16:14-15). Sport can thus become an important means of reconciliation and encounter: between peoples and within communities, schools, workplaces and families.

Second, in an increasingly digital society, where technology brings distant people closer together, yet often creates distances between those who are physically close, sport proves a valuable and concrete means of bringing individuals together, providing a healthier sense of the body, of space, effort and real time. It counters the temptation to escape into virtual worlds and it helps to preserve a healthy contact with nature and with real life, where genuine love is experienced (cf. 1 Jn 3:18).

Third, in our competitive society, where it seems that only the strong and winners deserve to live, sport also teaches us how to lose. It forces us, in learning the art of losing, to confront one of the deepest truths of our

human condition: our fragility, our limitations and our imperfections. This is important, because it is through the experience of these limits that we open our hearts to hope. Athletes who never make mistakes, who never lose, do not exist. Champions are not perfectly functioning machines, but real men and women, who, when they fall, find the courage to get back on their feet. Saint John Paul II hit the mark when he said that Jesus is “the true athlete of God” because he defeated the world not by strength, but by the fidelity of love (cf. Homily at the Mass for the Jubilee of Sportsmen and Sportswomen, 29 October 2000).

It is no coincidence that sport has played a significant role in the lives of many saints in our day, both as a personal discipline and as a means of evangelization. We can think of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, the patron saint of athletes, who will be canonized later this year on 7 September. His straightforward and luminous life reminds us that, just as no one is born a champion, no one is born a saint. It is daily training in love that brings us closer to final victory (cf. Rom 5:3-5) and enables us to contribute to the building of a new world. Saint Paul VI also observed this, twenty years after the end of the Second World War, when he reminded the members of a Catholic athletic association how much sports had helped to restore peace and hope in a society devastated by the consequences of war (cf. Address to the members of the C.S.I., 20 March 1965). He went on to say: “Your efforts are directed at the formation of a new society..., in the recognition that sport, by virtue of the sound educational values it promotes, can be a most useful means for the spiritual elevation of the human person, the primary and indispensable condition for an orderly, peaceful and constructive society.”

Dear athletes, the Church entrusts you with a beautiful mission: to reflect in all your activities the love of the Triune God, for your own good and for that of your brothers and sisters. Carry out this mission with enthusiasm: as athletes, as trainers, as associations and groups, and within your families. Pope Francis liked to point out that the Gospel presents the Virgin Mary as ever active, on the move, even “running” (cf. Lk 1:39), ever ready, as mothers are, to set out at a sign from God to help her children (cf. Address to the Volunteers of World Youth Day, 6 August 2023). Let us ask her to accompany our effort and enthusiasm, and to guide it always toward the greatest victory of all: the prize of eternal life on that playing-field where games will never end and our joy will be complete (cf. 1 Cor 9:24-25; 2 Tim 4:7-8).

**13. HOMILY OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV**  
**Saint John Lateran Square**  
**Sunday, 22 June 2025**

Dear brothers and sisters, it is wonderful to be in the presence of Jesus. The Gospel passage we just heard attests to this; it recounts how the crowds spent long hours listening to him speak about the Kingdom of God and seeing him heal the sick (cf. Lk 9:11). Jesus' compassion for the suffering shows us the loving closeness of God, who comes into our world to save us. Where God reigns, we are set free from all evil. Yet even for those who accept the good news brought by Jesus, the hour of trial comes. In that deserted place, where the crowds were listening to the Master, evening fell and there was nothing to eat (cf. v. 12). The hunger of the people and the setting of the sun speak to us of a limit that looms over the world and every creature: the day ends, as does the life of every human being. At that hour of need and of gathering shadows, Jesus remains present in our midst.

Precisely when the day is ending and hunger sets in, as the Apostles themselves ask him to dismiss the crowds, Christ surprises us with his mercy. He feels compassion for those who are hungry and he invites his disciples to provide for them. Hunger is not foreign to the preaching of the Kingdom and the message of salvation. On the contrary, it speaks to us of our relationship with God. At the same time, five loaves and two fish seem completely inadequate to feed the people. The disciples' calculations, apparently so reasonable, reveal their lack of faith. For where the Lord is present, we find all that we need to give strength and meaning to our lives.

Jesus responds to the appeal of hunger with the sign of sharing: he raises his eyes, recites the blessing, breaks the bread, and feeds all present (cf. v. 16). The Lord's actions are not some complicated magical rite; they simply show his gratitude to the Father, his filial prayer and the fraternal communion sustained by the Holy Spirit. Jesus multiplies the loaves and the fish by sharing what is available. As a result, there is enough for everyone. In fact, more than enough. After all had eaten their fill, twelve baskets-full were gathered up (cf. v. 17).

That is how Jesus satisfies the hunger of the crowd: he does what God does, and he teaches us to do the same. Today, in place of the crowds mentioned in the Gospel, entire peoples are suffering more as a result of the greed of others than from their own hunger. In stark contrast to

the dire poverty of many, the amassing of wealth by a few is the sign of an arrogant indifference that produces pain and injustice. Rather than sharing, it squanders the fruits of the earth and human labour. Especially in this Jubilee Year, the Lord's example is a yardstick that should guide our actions and our service: we are called to share our bread, to multiply hope and to proclaim the coming of God's Kingdom.

In saving the crowds from hunger, Jesus proclaims that he will save everyone from death. That is the mystery of faith, which we celebrate in the sacrament of the Eucharist. For just as hunger is a sign of our radical needs in this life, so breaking bread is a sign of God's gift of salvation.

Dear friends, Christ is God's answer to our human hunger, because his Body is the bread of eternal life: Take this and eat of it, all of you! Jesus' invitation reflects our daily experience: in order to remain alive, we need to nourish ourselves with life, drawing it from plants and animals. Yet eating something dead reminds us that we too, no matter how much we eat, will one day die. On the other hand, when we partake of Jesus, the living and true Bread, we live for him. By offering himself completely, the crucified and risen Lord delivers himself into our hands, and we realize that we were made to partake of God. Our hungry nature bears the mark of a need that is satisfied by the grace of the Eucharist. As Saint Augustine writes, Christ is truly "panis qui reficit, et non deficit; panis qui sumi potest, consumi non potest" (Serm. 130, 2): he is bread that restores and does not run short; bread that can be eaten but not exhausted. The Eucharist, in fact, is the true, real, and substantial presence of the Saviour (cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1413), who transforms bread into himself in order to transform us into himself. Living and life-giving, the Corpus Domini makes us, the Church herself, the Body of the Lord.

For this reason, echoing the Apostle Paul (cf. 1 Cor 10:17), the Second Vatican Council teaches that "in the sacrament of the Eucharistic bread, the unity of believers, who form one body in Christ, is both expressed and achieved. All are called to this union with Christ, who is the light of the world, from whom we come, through whom we live, and towards whom we direct our lives" (Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, 3). The procession that we are about to undertake is a sign of that journey. Together, as shepherds and flock, we will feed on the Blessed Sacrament, adore him and carry him through the streets. In doing so, we will present him before the eyes, the consciences and the hearts of the people. To the hearts of those who believe, so that they may believe

more firmly; to the hearts of those who do not believe, so that they may reflect on the hunger present within them and the bread that alone can satisfy it.

Strengthened by the food that God gives us, let us bring Jesus to the hearts of all, because Jesus involves everyone in his work of salvation by calling each of us to sit at his table. Blessed are those who are called, for they become witnesses of this love!

**14. HOMILY OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV**  
**Saint Peter's Basilica, Altar of the Confession**  
**Friday, 27 June 2025**

Today, the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Day of Prayer for the Sanctification of Priests, we celebrate this Eucharist with great joy as part of the Jubilee of Priests.

Before all else, dear brother priests, I wish to say a word to you, who have passed through the Holy Door to pray at the tomb of the Apostle Peter and to immerse your baptismal and priestly garments once more in the Heart of the Savior. For some of you, this is happening on a unique day in your lives: the day of your Ordination.

To speak of the Heart of Christ in this context is to reflect on the entire mystery of the Lord's incarnation, death and resurrection, which is entrusted in a special way to us, so that we can make it present in our world. In the light of the readings that we have just heard, let us reflect on how we can contribute to this work of salvation.

In the first reading, the prophet Ezekiel describes God as a shepherd who watches over his flock, counting his sheep one by one. He seeks out the lost, binds up the wounded, and strengthens the weak and sick (cf. Ezek 34:11-16). He thus reminds us, in this age of vast and devastating conflicts, that the love of God has no limits. We are called to let ourselves be embraced and shaped by that love, and to realize that in God's eyes – and our own as well – there is no place for division and hatred of any kind.

In the second reading (cf. Rom 5:5-11), Saint Paul reminds us that God reconciled us to himself “while we were still weak” (v. 6) and “sinful” (v. 8), and exhorts us to entrust ourselves, along a daily path of conversion,

to the transforming power of his Spirit who dwells in our hearts. Our hope is grounded in the knowledge that the Lord never abandons us: he is always at our side. At the same time, we are called to cooperate with him, above all by putting the Eucharist at the center of our lives, inasmuch as it is “the source and summit of the Christian life” (SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, 11). Then too, “through the fruitful reception of the sacraments, and especially by the frequent practice of sacramental penance” (Decree *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 18), and finally through prayer, meditation on God’s word, and the exercise of charity, conforming our hearts ever more closely to that of “the Father of mercies” (*ibid.*).

This brings us to today’s Gospel (cf. Lk 15:3-7), which speaks of the joy of God – and of every shepherd who loves in the manner of his Heart – at the return of even one of his sheep to the fold. We are called to exercise pastoral charity with a generous love, like that of the Father, and to foster in our hearts the desire that no one be lost (cf. Jn 6:39) but that everyone, also through our ministry, may come to know Christ and have eternal life in him (cf. Jn 6:40). We are called to deepen our closeness to Jesus (cf. *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 14) and to be a source of harmony in the midst of our brother priests. We do so by bearing on our shoulders those who are lost, granting forgiveness to those who have erred, seeking out those who have gone astray or been left behind, and caring for those who suffer in body or spirit. And to do all this in a great exchange of love that, flowing from the pierced side of the crucified Lord, embraces all people and fills the entire world. For, in the words of Pope Francis, “the wounded side of Christ continues to pour forth that stream which is never exhausted, never passes away, but offers itself time and time again to all those who wish to love as he did. For his love alone can bring about a new humanity” (Encyclical Letter *Dilexit Nos*, 219).

The priestly ministry is one of sanctification and reconciliation for the building up of the Body of Christ in unity (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 7). For this reason, the Second Vatican Council exhorted priests to make every effort to “lead all to the unity of charity” (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 9), harmonizing differences so that “no one... may feel left out” (*ibid.*). It also encouraged priests to remain united with their bishop and within the presbyterate (*ibid.*, 7-8). For the more we are united among ourselves, the more we will be able to lead others to the fold of the Good Shepherd, and to live as brothers and sisters in the one house of the Father.

Saint Augustine, in a homily delivered on the anniversary of his ordi-

nation, spoke of the joyful fruit of communion that unites the faithful, priests and bishops, grounded in the recognition that all of us are redeemed and saved by the same gracious mercy of God. It was in that context that he spoke the celebrated words: “For you I am a bishop, with you I am a Christian” (Serm. 340, 1).

In the solemn Mass inaugurating my Pontificate, I voiced before the People of God my great desire for “a united Church, a sign of unity and communion, which becomes a leaven for a reconciled world” (18 May 2025). Today, I share this desire once more with all of you. Reconciled with one another, united and transformed by the love that flows abundantly from the Heart of Christ, let us walk together humbly and resolutely in his footsteps, firm in faith and open to all in charity. Let us bring the peace of the risen Lord to our world, with the freedom born of the knowledge that we have been loved, chosen and sent by the Father.

Now, before concluding, I would like to say a word to you, dear Ordinands, who in a few moments, by the laying on of hands of the bishop and a renewed outpouring of the Holy Spirit, will become priests. What I have to say is simple, but I consider it important for your future and for the future of the souls entrusted to your care. Love God and your brothers and sisters, and give yourselves to them generously. Be fervent in your celebration of the sacraments, in prayer, especially in adoration before the Eucharist, and in your ministry. Keep close to your flock, give freely of your time and energy to everyone, without reserve and without partiality, as the pierced side of the crucified Jesus and the example of the saints teach us to do. Remember that the Church, in the two thousand years of her history, has had – and today continues to have – wonderful examples of priestly holiness. From the earliest communities on, the Church has raised up priests who have been martyrs, tireless apostles, missionaries, and champions of charity. Cherish this treasure: learn their stories, study their lives and work, imitate their virtues, be inspired by their zeal, and invoke their intercession often and insistently! All too often, today’s world offers models of success and prestige that are dubious and short-lived. Do not let yourselves be taken in by them! Look rather to the solid example and apostolic fruitfulness, frequently hidden and unassuming, of those who, with faith and dedication, have spent their lives in service of the Lord and their brothers and sisters. Keep their memory alive by your own example of fidelity.

Let us now entrust ourselves to the loving protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of priests and Mother of hope. May she direct and sus-

tain our steps, so that each day we may conform our hearts more closely to that of Christ, the supreme and eternal Shepherd.

**15. HOMILY OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV**  
**Saint Peter's Basilica**  
**Sunday, 29 June 2025**

Dear brothers and sisters,

Today we celebrate two brothers in faith, Peter and Paul, whom we honour as pillars of the Church and venerate as patrons of the diocese and city of Rome.

The story of these two Apostles has much to say to us, the community of the Lord's disciples, as we make our pilgrim way in today's world. Upon reflection, I would like to emphasize two specific aspects of their faith: ecclesial communion and the vitality of faith.

First, ecclesial communion. Today's liturgy reminds us how Peter and Paul were called to share a single fate, that of martyrdom, which united them definitively to Christ. In the first reading, we see Peter in prison awaiting judgment (cf. Acts 12:1-11). In the second reading, the Apostle Paul, also in chains, tells us, in a kind of last will and testament, that his blood is about to be poured out and offered to God (cf. 2 Tim 4:6-8, 17-18). Peter and Paul were both ready to lay down their lives for the sake of the Gospel.

Yet this communion of the two Apostles in the one confession of faith was the conclusion of a long journey on which each embraced the faith and lived out his apostolate in his own particular way. Their brotherhood in the Spirit did not erase their different backgrounds. Simon was a fisherman from Galilee, while Saul was highly educated and a member of the party of the Pharisees. Peter immediately left everything to follow the Lord, while Paul persecuted Christians before his life-changing encounter with the risen Christ. Peter preached mainly to the Jews, whereas Paul was driven to bring the Good News to the gentiles.

As we know, the two were at odds over the proper way to deal with gentile converts, so much so that Paul tells us that, "when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood self-condemned"

(Gal 2:11). At the Council of Jerusalem, the two Apostles would once more debate the issue.

Dear friends, the history of Peter and Paul shows us that the communion to which the Lord calls us is a unison of voices and personalities that does not eliminate anyone's freedom. Our patron saints followed different paths, had different ideas and at times argued with one another with evangelical frankness. Yet this did not prevent them from living the *concordia apostolorum*, that is, a living communion in the Spirit, a fruitful harmony in diversity. As Saint Augustine remarks, "the feast of the two Apostles is celebrated on one day. They too were one. For although they were martyred on different days, they were one" (Serm. 295, 7.7).

All this invites us to reflect on the nature of ecclesial communion. Awakened by the inspiration of the Spirit, it unites differences and builds bridges of unity thanks to the rich variety of charisms, gifts and ministries. It is important that we learn to experience communion in this way — as unity within diversity — so that the various gifts, united in the one confession of faith, may advance the preaching of the Gospel. We are called to persevere along this path, following the example of Peter and Paul, since all of us need that kind of fraternity. The whole Church needs fraternity, which must be present in all of our relationships, whether between lay people and priests, priests and bishops, bishops and the Pope. Fraternity is also needed in pastoral care, ecumenical dialogue and the friendly relations that the Church desires to maintain with the world. Let us make an effort, then, to turn our differences into a workshop of unity and communion, of fraternity and reconciliation, so that everyone in the Church, each with his or her personal history, may learn to walk side by side.

Saints Peter and Paul also challenge us to think about the vitality of our faith. In our life as disciples, we can always risk falling into a rut, a routine, a tendency to follow the same old pastoral plans without experiencing interior renewal and a willingness to respond to new challenges. The two Apostles, however, can inspire us by the example of their openness to change, to new events, encounters and concrete situations in the life of their communities, and by their readiness to consider new approaches to evangelization in response to the problems and difficulties raised by our brothers and sisters in the faith.

At the heart of today's Gospel lies the question that Jesus asked his disciples. Today he asks us that same question, challenging us to examine

whether our faith life retains its energy and vitality, and whether the flame of our relationship with the Lord still burns bright: “Who do you say that I am?” (Mt 16:15).

Every day, at every moment in history, we must always take this question to heart. If we want to keep our identity as Christians from being reduced to a relic of the past, as Pope Francis often reminded us, it is important to move beyond a tired and stagnant faith. We need to ask ourselves: Who is Jesus Christ for us today? What place does he occupy in our lives and in the life of the Church? How can we bear witness to this hope in our daily lives and proclaim it to those whom we meet?

Brothers and sisters, the exercise of a discernment born of these questions can enable our faith and the faith of the Church to be constantly renewed and to find new paths and new approaches to preaching the Gospel. This, together with communion, must be our greatest desire. Today I would like to speak to the Church in Rome in particular, because it, above all, is called to be a sign of unity and communion, a Church on fire with vibrant faith, a community of disciples who testify to the joy and consolation of the Gospel wherever people find themselves.

In the joy of the communion that the lives of Saints Peter and Paul invite us to cultivate, I greet my brother Archbishops who today receive the Pallium. Dear brothers, this sign of the pastoral responsibility entrusted to you also expresses your communion with the Bishop of Rome, so that in the unity of the Catholic faith, each of you may build up that communion in your local Churches.

I would also like to greet the members of the Synod of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. I thank you for your presence here and for your pastoral zeal. May the Lord grant peace to your people!

And with deep gratitude, I greet the Delegation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, sent here by my dear brother, His Holiness Bartholomew.

Dear brothers and sisters, strengthened by the witness of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, let us walk together in faith and communion and invoke their intercession upon ourselves, the city of Rome, the Church, and the whole world.

**16. HOMILY OF POPE LEO XIV**  
**Borgo Laudato si' (Castel Gandolfo)**  
**Wednesday, 9 July 2025**

On this beautiful day, I would begin by asking everyone, including myself, to take stock of what we are celebrating here amid the beauty of what might be called a “cathedral” of nature, with so many plants and elements of creation that have brought us together to celebrate the Eucharist, which means to give thanks to the Lord.

There are many reasons to thank the Lord in today’s Eucharist. This may well be the first celebration to use the new prayers of the Mass for the Care of Creation, which is the fruit of the work of several Dicasteries of the Holy See.

For my part, I express gratitude to all those people here who have had a part in producing these liturgical prayers. As you know, the liturgy represents life, and you are the life of this Laudato Si’ Center. I would also like to thank you on this occasion for all that you are doing to bring to life this fine idea of Pope Francis, who donated this small plot of land, these gardens and these walks, in order to continue the important work of caring for creation and our common home. The need to persevere in this mission has become all the more apparent in the ten years that have passed since the publication of Laudato Si’.

This setting [before a pool of water] in some way resembles the ancient churches of the early centuries, where there was a baptismal font that one had to pass before entering the church. I am not sure I would want to be baptized in the water here..., but the symbol of passing through water to be cleansed of all our sins and failings, and then to enter into the great mystery of the Church is something that still speaks to us today. At the beginning of Mass, we prayed for conversion, our own conversion. I would like to add that we should pray for the conversion of the many people, inside and outside the Church, who do not yet recognize the urgent need to care for our common home.

The many natural disasters we see occurring almost daily in our world, in so many places and countries, are also in part a result of the excesses of human beings and our lifestyles. We need to ask whether we ourselves are undergoing that conversion. How much we need it!

Having said this, I also have a homily that I prepared and will share with

you, so please bear with me. A couple of its points will help to carry forward our reflection this morning. We are enjoying this fraternal and peaceful moment in the midst of a world that is in flames, as a result of both global warming and armed conflicts. The message of Pope Francis in his Encyclicals *Laudato Si'* and *Fratelli Tutti* continues to be timely. We can imagine ourselves in the Gospel we have just heard, as we reflect on the fear of the disciples amid the tempest, a fear shared by a large part of humanity today. At the same time, in the heart of this Jubilee Year, we believe and say over and over again: there is hope! We have encountered that hope in Jesus. He calms the storm. His power does not break down, but builds up. It does not destroy, but calls into being and bestows new life. We too should be asking ourselves: "What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?" (Mt 8:27).

The amazement expressed in this question is the first step towards freedom from fear. Jesus lived and prayed around the Sea of Galilee. That is where he called his first disciples in the setting of their daily lives and work. The parables with which he proclaimed the Kingdom of God reveal his deep connection with that land and those waters, with the rhythm of the seasons and with the life of creatures.

The evangelist Matthew describes the tempest as an upheaval of the earth (the Greek word he uses is *seismos*). Matthew uses the same term for the earthquake that took place at the moment of Jesus' death and at the dawn of his resurrection. Christ rises above this upheaval, his feet firmly planted. Already here, the Gospel enables us to catch a glimpse of the Risen Lord, present in our confused history. Jesus' rebuke to the wind and the sea demonstrates his power to give life and salvation, a power greater than those forces that cause creatures to tremble.

So, we can ask ourselves once more: "What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?" (Mt 8:27). The hymn from the Letter to the Colossians that we have heard seems to answer this very question: "He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him all things were created" (Col 1:15-16). Buffeted by the storm that day, his disciples were overcome with fear; they were not yet able to profess this knowledge about Jesus. Today, however, in accordance with the faith handed down to us, we can go further and say: "He is the head of the Body, the Church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent" (v. 18). Those words, in every age, make us and commit us to be a living Body: the Body of which Christ is the Head. Our mission to care for creation, to

foster peace and reconciliation, is Jesus' own mission, the mission that the Lord entrusts to us. We hear the cry of the earth and we hear the cry of the poor, because this plea has reached the heart of God. Our indignation is his indignation; our work is his work.

In this regard, the psalmist's song inspires us: "The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of glory thunders, the Lord, upon many waters. The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty" (Ps 29:3-4). That voice commits the Church to speak prophetically, even when it calls for the courage to oppose the destructive power of the princes of this world. The unbreakable covenant between Creator and his creatures inspires our minds and galvanizes our efforts to ensure that evil may turn into good, injustice into justice, and greed to sharing.

With infinite love, God has created all things and given them life. That is why Saint Francis of Assisi could call every creature his brother, his sister and his mother. Only a contemplative gaze can change our relationship with creation and bring us out of the ecological crisis brought on by the breakdown of our relationship with God, with our neighbors and with the earth that is the effect of sin (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 66).

Dear brothers and sisters, the Borgo *Laudato Si'*, where we now find ourselves, seeks to be, in line with the vision of Pope Francis, a kind of "laboratory" where we can experience that harmony with creation which brings healing and reconciliation, and to do so by developing new and effective ways of protecting the natural environment entrusted to our care. I want to assure all of you, who are working to realize this project, of my prayers and my encouragement.

The Eucharist we celebrate sustains and gives meaning to our work. As Pope Francis wrote, "it is in the Eucharist that all that has been created finds its greatest exaltation. Grace, which tends to manifest itself tangibly, found unsurpassable expression when God himself became man and gave himself as food for his creatures. The Lord, in the culmination of the mystery of the Incarnation, chose to reach our intimate depths through a fragment of matter. He comes not from above, but from within; he comes that we might find him in this world of ours" (*Laudato Si'*, 236). I would like to conclude these thoughts by leaving you with the words with which Saint Augustine, in the last pages of his *Confessions*, brought together creation and humanity in a cosmic hymn of praise: Lord, "your works praise you, that we may love you; may we love you, that your works may praise you" (XIII, 33, 48). May this be the harmony that

we spread throughout the world.

**17. HOMILY OF POPE LEO XIV**  
**Pontifical Parish of Saint Thomas of Villanova (Castel Gandolfo)**  
**Sunday, 13 July 2025**

Brothers and sisters,

I have the joy of celebrating this Eucharist with you. I greet all those present, the parish community, the priests, and His Eminence, the Bishop of the Diocese, and the civil and military authorities.

In this Sunday's Gospel, we have heard one of Jesus' most beautiful and moving parables. We all know the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37).

That parable constantly challenges us to think about our own lives. It troubles our dormant or distracted consciences, and warns us about the risk of a complacent faith that is satisfied with the outward observance of the law but incapable of feeling and acting with the same merciful compassion as God.

The parable is really about compassion. True, the Gospel story speaks of the compassion that moved the Samaritan to act, but it first speaks of how others regarded the wounded man lying on the roadside after being attacked by robbers. We are told that a priest and a Levite "saw him and passed by" (v. 32). Of the Samaritan, however, the Gospel says, "he saw him and had compassion on him" (v. 33).

Dear brothers and sisters, how we look at others is what counts, because it shows what is in our hearts. We can look and walk by, or we can look and be moved with compassion.

There is a kind of seeing that is superficial, distracted and hasty, a way of seeing while pretending not to see. We can see without being touched or challenged by the sight. Then too, there is seeing with the eyes of the heart, looking more closely, empathizing with the other, sharing his or her experience, letting ourselves be touched and challenged. This way of seeing calls into question the way we live our life and the responsi-

lity we feel towards others.

The parable speaks to us first about God's way of seeing us, so that we in turn can learn how to see situations and people with his eyes, so full of love and compassion. The Good Samaritan is really a figure of Jesus, the eternal Son whom the Father sent into our history precisely because he regarded humanity with compassion and did not walk by.

Like the man in the Gospel who was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, humanity was descending to the depths of death; in our own day too, we have to confront the darkness of evil, suffering, poverty and the riddle of death.

Yet God has looked upon us with compassion; he wanted to walk our same path and come down among us. In Jesus, the Good Samaritan, he came to heal our wounds and to pour out upon us the balm of his love and mercy.

Pope Francis, who often reminded us that God is mercy and compassion, once referred to Jesus as "the compassion of the Father toward us" (Angelus, 14 July 2029). Saint Augustine tells us that, as the Good Samaritan who came to our aid, Jesus "wanted to be known as our neighbor. Indeed, the Lord Jesus Christ makes us realize that he is the one who cared for the half-dead man beaten by robbers and left on the side of the road (De Doctrina Christiana, I, 30.33).

We can understand, then, why this parable is so challenging for each of us. If Christ shows us the face of a compassionate God, then to believe in him and to be his disciples means allowing ourselves to be changed and to take on his same feelings. It means learning to have a heart that is moved, eyes that see and do not look away, hands that help others and soothe their wounds, shoulders that bear the burden of those in need.

In today's first reading, we hear the words of Moses, who tells us that obeying the Lord's commandments and turning our minds and hearts to him does not involve multiplying outward acts, but rather looking to our own hearts and discovering that there God has written his law of love.

If we realize deep down that Christ, the Good Samaritan, loves us and cares for us, we too will be moved to love in the same way and to become compassionate as he is. Once we are healed and loved by Christ, we too

can become witnesses of his love and compassion in our world.

Brothers and sisters, today we need this “revolution of love.” Today, the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Jericho is the road travelled by all those who descend into sin, suffering and poverty. It is the road travelled by all those weighed down by troubles or hurt by life. The road travelled by all who fall down, lose their bearings and hit rock bottom. The road travelled by all those peoples that are stripped, robbed and pillaged, victims of tyrannical political systems, of an economy that forces them into poverty, and of wars that kill their dreams and their very lives.

What do we do? Do we look and walk by, or do we open our hearts to others, like the Samaritan? Are we content at times merely to do our duty, or to regard as our neighbor only those who are part of our group, who think like us, who share our same nationality or religion? Jesus overturns this way of thinking by presenting us with a Samaritan, a foreigner or heretic, who acts as a neighbor to that wounded man. And he asks us to do the same.

The Samaritan, wrote Benedict XVI, “does not ask how far his obligations of solidarity extend. Nor does he ask about the merits required for eternal life. Something else happens: his heart is wrenched open... If the question had been ‘Is the Samaritan my neighbor, too?’ the answer would have been a pretty clear-cut no, given the situation at the time.

But Jesus now turns the whole matter on its head: the Samaritan, the foreigner, makes himself the neighbor and shows me that I have to learn to be a neighbor deep within and that I already have the answer in myself. I have to become like someone in love, someone whose heart is open to being shaken up by another’s need” (Jesus of Nazareth, 197).

Looking without walking by, halting the frantic pace of our lives, allowing the lives of others, whoever they may be, with their needs and troubles, to touch our heart. That is what makes us neighbors to one another, what generates true fraternity and breaks down walls and barriers. In the end, love prevails, and proves more powerful than evil and death.

Dear friends, let us look to Christ, the Good Samaritan. Let us listen again today to his voice. For he says to each of us, “Go and do likewise” (v. 37).

**18. HOMILY OF POPE LEO XIV**  
**Parish of Saint Thomas of Villanova, Castel Gandolfo**  
**Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, 15 July 2025**

Brothers and sisters,

I share with you the joy of celebrating this Eucharist and I wish to greet all who are present: the parish community, the priests, the Bishop of the Diocese, His Eminence, and the civil and military authorities.

The Gospel of this Sunday, which we have just heard, is one of the most beautiful and inspiring parables told by Jesus. We all know the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37).

This story continues to challenge us today. It questions our lives, unsettles the complacency of our distracted or drowsy consciences, and warns us against the risk of a faith that is comfortable, reduced to external observance of the law but incapable of feeling and acting with the very compassion of God.

Compassion, in fact, lies at the heart of the parable. And while in the Gospel account it is described through the actions of the Samaritan, the first thing the passage highlights is the gaze. Indeed, faced with a wounded man lying on the roadside after being attacked by robbers, both the priest and the Levite, it says, “saw him and passed by on the other side” (v. 32). By contrast, of the Samaritan the Gospel says: “When he saw him, he was moved with compassion” (v. 33).

Dear brothers and sisters, the gaze makes all the difference, because it expresses what we carry in our hearts: to see and pass by, or to see and be moved with compassion. There is a way of seeing that is superficial, distracted, hurried—a gaze that pretends not to see, that refuses to be touched or challenged by another’s situation.

But there is also a way of seeing with the eyes of the heart: a deeper gaze, an empathy that puts us in the other’s place, that makes us interiorly participate, that moves us, stirs us, and questions our lives and our responsibilities.

The first gaze the parable wishes to speak to us about is the gaze God has directed toward us, so that we too may learn to see with His eyes—eyes filled with love and compassion for one another. Truly, the Good Sama-

ritan is above all the image of Jesus, the eternal Son whom the Father sent into history precisely because He looked upon humanity without passing by, with eyes, with heart, with a compassion that moved Him to act. Like that man in the Gospel who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, humanity was descending into the abyss of death and, even today, often struggles with the darkness of evil, suffering, poverty, and the absurdity of death. Yet God looked upon us with compassion, chose to walk our road Himself, came down among us, and in Jesus, the Good Samaritan, came to heal our wounds, pouring upon us the oil of His love and mercy.

Pope Francis has reminded us so many times that God is mercy and compassion, and he affirmed that Jesus “is the compassion of the Father for us” (Angelus, 14 July 2019). He is the Good Samaritan who came to meet us. Saint Augustine tells us: “He chose to be called our neighbor. For the Lord Jesus Christ represented Himself under the guise of that man who aided the poor man fallen on the way, wounded, half-dead, and abandoned by the robbers” (Christian Doctrine, I, 30.33).

We thus understand why the parable also challenges each of us: since Christ is the revelation of a compassionate God, to believe in Him and follow Him as His disciples means allowing ourselves to be transformed so that we may have His same sentiments—that is, a heart moved with compassion, a gaze that sees and does not pass by, two hands that bind up wounds and bring relief, strong shoulders that bear the burdens of those in need.

Today’s first reading, as we hear the words of Moses, tells us that obeying the Lord’s commandments and turning to Him does not mean multiplying external acts, but rather returning to our own hearts, to discover that it is there that God has written the law of love. If deep within our lives we discover that Christ, the Good Samaritan, loves us and cares for us, then we too are impelled to love in the same way and to become compassionate as He is. Healed and loved by Christ, we ourselves become signs of His love and compassion in the world.

Brothers and sisters, today we are in need of this revolution of love. Today that road descending from Jerusalem to Jericho—a city below sea level—is the road traveled by all who sink into evil, into suffering and poverty; it is the road of many oppressed by hardship or wounded by life’s circumstances; the road of those who have “fallen low,” who touch bottom; the road of peoples despoiled, plundered, and robbed—victims

of oppressive political systems, of an economy that condemns them to poverty, of wars that kill their dreams and their lives.

And what about us? Do we see and pass by, or do we allow our hearts to be pierced like that of the Samaritan? At times we are content with doing only our duty, or we consider as neighbor only those within our circle, those who think like us, who share our nationality or religion. Yet Jesus overturns this perspective, presenting us with a Samaritan, a foreigner and heretic, who becomes neighbor to the wounded man. And He asks us to do the same.

The Samaritan, wrote Benedict XVI, “does not ask how far his duties of solidarity extend, nor what qualifications are necessary for eternal life. Something else happens: his heart is wrenched open [...]. If the question had been: ‘Is the Samaritan also my neighbor?’ then, in the situation described, the answer would have been a clear and decisive ‘no.’ But Jesus turns the question around: the Samaritan, the foreigner, makes himself a neighbor, and shows me that it is from within myself that I must learn to be a neighbor, that the answer is already within me. I must become a person who loves, a person whose heart is open to being moved by the needs of others” (Jesus of Nazareth, 253).

To see without passing by; to stop our hurried race; to allow another’s life—with its needs and sufferings, whoever they may be—to break open our hearts. This brings us closer to one another, generates true fraternity, and tears down walls and barriers. And in the end, love opens a way forward, proving stronger than evil and death.

Dearest friends, let us look to Christ, the Good Samaritan, and hear once again His voice that says to each of us: “Go and do likewise” (v. 37).

Words of the Holy Father at the conclusion of Mass:

At this moment, I would like to offer a small gift to the Pastor of this Pontifical Parish, as a remembrance of our celebration today [applause]. The paten and the chalice with which we celebrated the Eucharist are instruments of communion, and they can serve as an invitation for all of us to live in communion, to truly promote this fraternity, this communion that we share in Jesus Christ.

**19. HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIV**  
**Cathedral of Albano**  
**XVI Sunday in Ordinary Time, 20 July 2025**

Dear brothers and sisters,

I am very happy to be here to celebrate today's Eucharist in this beautiful Cathedral. As you know, I was supposed to be here on 12 May, but the Holy Spirit worked in a different way. But I am truly pleased to be with you and in the spirit of fraternity and Christian joy, I greet all of you here present, His Eminence, as well as the Bishop of the Diocese, and the authorities present.

In this Mass, both the first reading and the Gospel invite us to reflect on hospitality, service and listening (cf. Gen 18:1-10; Lk 10:38-42).

First, God visits Abraham in the figure of "three men" who arrive at his tent "in the heat of the day" (cf. Gen 18:1-2). The scene is easy to imagine: the blazing sun, the stillness of the desert, the intense heat, and the three strangers seeking shelter. Abraham is seated "at the entrance of his tent," the position of the master of the house, and it is moving to see how he exercises this role. Recognizing the presence of God in the visitors, he gets up, runs to greet them, and prostrates himself on the ground imploring them to stay. Thus the whole scene comes to life. The afternoon's stillness is filled with gestures of love which involve not only the Patriarch, but also his wife Sarah and the servants. Abraham is no longer seated, but stands "by them under the tree" (Gen 18:8), and it is there that God gives him the best news he could have hoped for: "your wife Sarah shall have a son" (Gen 18:10).

The dynamics of this encounter lead us to reflect on how God chooses the path of hospitality in order to enter into the lives of Sarah and Abraham and announce that they would have a child, which they had long desired but had given up hope of receiving. Having visited them before in many moments of grace, God returns to knock on their door, asking for hospitality and trust. The elderly couple respond positively, despite not yet understanding what will happen. They recognize God's blessing and his presence in the mysterious visitors, and offer them what they have: food, company, service and the shade of a tree. In return, they receive the promise of new life and descendants.

While the circumstances are different, the Gospel also teaches us about God's way of acting. Here too, Jesus appears as a guest at the house of Martha and Mary. This time, however, he is not a stranger: he comes to his friends' house in the midst of a festive atmosphere. One of the sisters welcomes him by serving him, while the other sits at his feet, listening as a disciple would her teacher. As we know, Jesus responds to the first sister's complaints that she would like some help with the tasks at hand by inviting her to recognize the value of listening (cf. Lk 10:41-42).

It would be incorrect, however, to see these two attitudes as mutually exclusive, or to compare the merits of the two women. Service and listening are, in fact, twin dimensions of hospitality.

Our relationship with God comes first. Although it is true that we must live out our faith through concrete actions, faithfully carrying out our duties according to our state of life and vocation, it is essential that we do so only after meditating on the Word of God and listening to what the Holy Spirit is saying to our hearts. To this end, we should set aside moments of silence, moments of prayer, times in which, quieting noise and distractions, we recollect ourselves before God in simplicity of heart. This is a dimension of the Christian life that we particularly need to recover today, both as a value for individuals and communities, and as a prophetic sign for our times. We must make room for silence, for listening to the Father who speaks and "sees in secret" (Mt 6:6). Summer can be a providential time to experience the beauty and importance of our relationship with God, and how much it can help us to be more open, more welcoming to others.

During the summer, we have more free time in which to gather our thoughts and reflect, and also to travel and spend time with each other. Let us make good use of this, by leaving behind the whirlwind of commitments and worries in order to savour a few moments of peace, of reflection, taking time as well to visit other places and share in the joy of seeing others — as I am doing here today. Let us make summer an opportunity to care for others, to get to know each other and to offer advice and a listening ear, for these are expressions of love, and that is something we all need. Let us do so with courage. In this way, through solidarity, in the sharing of faith and life, we will help to promote a culture of peace, helping those around us to overcome divisions and hostility and to build communion between individuals, peoples and religions.

Pope Francis said that “If we want to savour life with joy, we must associate these two approaches: on the one hand, ‘being at the feet’ of Jesus, in order to listen to him as he reveals to us the secret of everything; on the other, being attentive and ready in hospitality, when he passes and knocks at our door, with the face of a friend who needs a moment of rest and fraternity” (Angelus, 21 July 2019). These words were pronounced just a few months before the pandemic broke out; that long and difficult experience, which we still remember, taught us much about their truth.

Certainly all of this requires effort. Serving and listening do not always come easily; they require hard work and the ability to make sacrifices. For instance, it takes an effort in listening and serving in order to be faithful and loving mothers and fathers raising their family, just as it requires effort for children to respond to their parents’ hard work at home and at school. It also requires effort in order to understand each other when there are disagreements, to forgive when mistakes are made, to help when someone is sick, and to comfort one another in times of sadness. But it is precisely by making an effort that something worthwhile can be built in life; it is the only way to form and nurture strong and genuine relationships between people. Thus, with the foundations of everyday life, the Kingdom of God grows and manifests its presence (cf. Lk 7:18-22).

Saint Augustine, reflecting on the story of Martha and Mary in one of his homilies, said: “These two women symbolize two lives: the present and the future; a life lived in toil and a life of rest; one troubled and the other blessed; one temporary, the other eternal” (Serm. 104, 4). And considering Martha’s work, Augustine said: “Who is exempt from the duty of caring for others? Who can rest from these tasks? Let us try to carry them out with charity and in such a way that none will be able to find fault with us... The weariness will pass and rest will come, but rest will only come through the effort made. The ship will sail and reach its homeland; but the homeland will not be reached except by means of the ship” (ibid., 6-7).

Today, Abraham, Martha and Mary remind us that listening and service are two complementary attitudes that enable us to open ourselves and our lives to the blessings of the Lord. Their example invites us to reconcile contemplation and action, rest and hard work, silence and the bustle of our daily lives with wisdom and balance, always taking Jesus’ charity as our measure, his Word as our light, and his grace as our sour-

ce of strength, which sustains us beyond our own capacity (cf. Phil 4:13).

**20. HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIV**  
**Tor Vergata**  
**18th Sunday in Ordinary Time, 3 August 2025**

Greeting of His Holiness Pope Leo XIV to Young People before Holy Mass

Good morning! Happy Sunday! I hope that all of you rested a little bit. We will shortly begin the greatest celebration that Christ left us, his very presence in the Eucharist. God bless you all. May this be a truly memorable occasion for each and every one of us when together, as Christ's Church, we walk together and we live with Jesus Christ.

A blessed celebration to all!

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Dear young people,

After last night's Prayer Vigil, we gather again today to celebrate the Eucharist, the Sacrament of the Lord's total gift of himself to us. We can imagine ourselves today retracing the journey made on Easter evening by the disciples on the road to Emmaus (cf. Lk 24:13-35): they set out from Jerusalem frightened and disappointed, convinced that, after Jesus' death, there was nothing more to expect, nothing in which to place their hope. But they later found him along the way, welcomed him as a travelling companion, listened to him as he explained the Scriptures, and then recognized him in the breaking of the bread. Their eyes were opened, and the joyful news of Easter found a place in their hearts.

Today's liturgy does not mention this episode directly, but it does invite us to reflect on what it recounts: the encounter with the risen Christ who transforms our lives and enlightens our affections, desires and thoughts.

The first reading, taken from the Book of Ecclesiastes, invites us, like the two disciples, to come to terms with the experience of our limitations and the fleeting nature of all things that pass away (cf. Eccl 1:2; 2:21-23). On a similar note, the Responsorial Psalm presents us with the image of "the grass that is renewed... in the morning it flourishes and is renewed;

in the evening it fades and withers” (Ps 90:5-6). These are two strong reminders which may be a bit shocking, but which should not frighten us as if they were “taboo” issues to be avoided. The fragility they speak of is, in fact, part of the marvel of creation.

Think of the image of grass: is not a field of flowers beautiful? Of course, it is delicate, made up of small, vulnerable stems, prone to drying out, to being bent and broken. Yet at the same time these flowers are immediately replaced by others that sprout up after them, generously nourished and fertilized by the first ones as they decay on the ground. This is how the field survives: through constant regeneration. Even during the cold months of winter, when everything seems silent, its energy stirs beneath the ground, preparing to blossom into a thousand colors when spring comes.

We too, dear friends, are made this way, we are made for this. We are not made for a life where everything is taken for granted and static, but for an existence that is constantly renewed through gift of self in love. This is why we continually aspire to something “more” that no created reality can give us; we feel a deep and burning thirst that no drink in this world can satisfy.

Knowing this, let us not deceive our hearts by trying to satisfy them with cheap imitations! Let us rather listen to them! Let us turn this thirst into a step stool, like children who stand on tiptoe, in order to peer through the window of encounter with God. We will then find ourselves before him, who is waiting for us, knocking gently on the window of our soul (cf. Rev 3:20). It is truly beautiful, especially at a young age, to open wide your hearts, to allow him to enter, and to set out on this adventure with him towards eternity.

Saint Augustine, reflecting on his intense search for God, asked himself: “What, then, is the object of our hope [...]? Is it the earth? No. Is it something that comes from the earth, such as gold, silver, trees, crops, or water [...]? These things are pleasing, these things are beautiful, these things are good” (Sermo 313/F, 3). And the conclusion he reached was: “Seek the one who made them, he is your hope” (ibid.).

Thinking of his own journey, he prayed, saying: “You [Lord] were within me, but I was outside, and it was there that I searched for you [...] You called, you shouted, and you broke through my deafness. You flashed, you shone and you dispelled my blindness. You breathed your fragran-

ce on me; I drew in breath and now I pant for you. I have tasted you (cf. Ps 34:8; 1 Pt 2:3) now I hunger and thirst for more (cf. Mt 5:6; 1 Cor 4:11); you touched me, and I burned for your peace” (Confessions, 10, 27).

Sisters and brothers, these are beautiful words and they remind us of what Pope Francis said to young people like you in Lisbon during World Youth Day: “we find ourselves facing great questions that have no simple or immediate answers, but challenge us to continue the journey, to rise above ourselves and to press beyond the here and now. [...] We are called to something higher, and we will never be able to soar unless we first take flight. We should not be alarmed, then, if we sense an inner thirst, a restless, unfulfilled longing for meaning and a future [...] We should not be lethargic, but alive!” (Address to University Students, 3 August 2023).

There is a burning question in our hearts, a need for truth that we cannot ignore, which leads us to ask ourselves: what is true happiness? What is the true meaning of life? What can free us from being trapped in meaninglessness, boredom and mediocrity?

In recent days, you have had many beautiful experiences. You have met other young people from different parts of the world and from diverse cultures. You have exchanged knowledge, shared expectations and entered into dialogue with the city through art, music, technology and sport. At the Circus Maximus, you also approached the Sacrament of Penance and received God’s forgiveness, asking for his help to live a good life.

Through all this, you can grasp an important point: the fullness of our existence does not depend on what we store up or, as we heard in the Gospel, on what we possess (cf. Lk 12:13-21). Rather, fullness has to do with what we joyfully welcome and share (cf. Mt 10:8-10; Jn 6:1-13). Buying, hoarding and consuming are not enough. We need to lift our eyes, to look upwards, to the “things that are above” (Col 3:2), to realize that everything in the world has meaning only insofar as it serves to unite us to God and to our brothers and sisters in charity, helping us to grow in “compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience” (Col 3:12), forgiveness (cf. *ibid.*, v. 13) and peace (cf. Jn 14:27), all in imitation of Christ (cf. Phil 2:5).

And in this way we will grow in an ever deeper understanding of what it means that hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us

(cf. Rom 5:5).

Dear young people, Jesus is our hope. It is he, as Saint John Paul II said, “who stirs in you the desire to do something great with your lives [...] to commit... to improving yourselves and society, making the world more human and more fraternal.” (XV World Youth Day, Prayer Vigil, 19 August 2000).

Let us remain united to him, let us remain in his friendship, always, cultivating it through prayer, adoration, Eucharistic Communion, frequent Confession, and generous charity, following the examples of Blessed Piergiorgio Frassati and Blessed Carlo Acutis who will soon be declared saints. Aspire to great things, to holiness, wherever you are. Do not settle for less. You will then see the light of the Gospel growing every day, in you and around you.

I entrust you to the Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Hope. With her help, as you return to your countries in the coming days, in every part of the world, continue to walk joyfully in the footsteps of the Savior, and spread your enthusiasm and the witness of your faith to everyone you meet! Have a good trip home!

**21. REGINA CAELI**  
**Loggia of the Blessings of St. Peter’s Basilica**  
**Sunday, 11 May 2025**

Dear brothers and sisters, happy Sunday!

I consider it a gift from God that the first Sunday of my service as Bishop of Rome is Good Shepherd Sunday, the fourth Sunday of Easter. On this Sunday, we always hear proclaimed at Mass a passage from the tenth chapter from the Gospel of John, where Jesus reveals himself as the true Shepherd: who knows and loves his sheep and gives his life for them.

This Sunday also marks the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, which we have celebrated for the last sixty-two years. Rome is also hosting the Jubilee of Bands and Popular Entertainment today. I greet all these pilgrims with affection and thank them because, with their music and performances, they enliven the feast of Christ the Good Shepherd: the

One who guides the Church with his Holy Spirit.

In the Gospel, Jesus says that he knows his sheep and that they listen to his voice and follow him (cf. Jn 10:27). Indeed, as Pope Saint Gregory the Great teaches, people “respond to the love of those who love them” (Homily 14:3-6).

Today brothers and sisters, I therefore have the joy of praying with you and all the People of God for vocations, especially those to the priesthood and consecrated life.

The Church has such a great need for them! It is important that young men and women on their vocational journey find acceptance, listening and encouragement in their communities, and that they can look up to credible models of generous dedication to God and to their brothers and sisters.

Let us take up the invitation that Pope Francis left us in his Message for today: the invitation to welcome and accompany young people. And let us ask our heavenly Father to assist us in living in service to one another, each according to his or her state of life, shepherds after his own heart (cf. Jer 3:15) capable of helping one another to walk in love and truth. And to young people, I say: “Do not be afraid! Accept the invitation of the Church and of Christ the Lord!”

May the Virgin Mary, whose entire life was a response to the Lord’s call, always accompany us in following Jesus.

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After the Regina Caeli

Dear brothers and sisters,

The immense tragedy of the Second World War ended eighty years ago, on 8 May, after having claimed sixty million victims. In today’s dramatic scenario of a piecemeal third world war, as Pope Francis stated many times, I too address the world’s leaders, repeating the ever-timely appeal: “Never again war!”

I carry in my heart the sufferings of the beloved Ukrainian people. May everything possible be done to reach an authentic, just and lasting peace, as soon as possible. Let all the prisoners be freed and the children return to their own families.

I am deeply saddened by what is happening in the Gaza Strip: may there be an immediate ceasefire! Let humanitarian aid be provided to the stricken civil population, and let all the hostages be freed.

On the other hand, I have welcomed with satisfaction the announcement of the ceasefire between India and Pakistan, and I hope that through the upcoming negotiations, a lasting accord may be reached soon.

But how many other conflicts there are in the world! I entrust this heartfelt appeal to the Queen of Peace, so that she may present it to the Lord Jesus to obtain for us the miracle of peace.

And now I affectionately greet you all, Romans and pilgrims from various countries. I greet the members of the British and Foreign Bible Society, the group of doctors from Granada (Spain), the faithful of Malta, Panama, Dallas (Texas), Valladolid, Torrelodones (Madrid), Montesilvano, and Cinisi (Palermo).

I greet the participants in the “Let’s choose life” demonstration, the young people of the Fraternity of Blessed Mary Immaculate and Saint Francis of Assisi, of Reggio Emilia.

Today in Italy and in other countries we celebrate Mother’s Day. I send a fond greeting to all mothers, with a prayer for them, and for those who are already in Heaven.

Happy Mother’s Day to all mothers!

Thank you all, a happy Sunday to everyone!

**22.REGINA CAELI**  
**AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE MASS**  
**Saint Peter's Square**  
**Sunday, 18 May 2025**

As we conclude this celebration, I greet and thank all of you, the people of Rome and the faithful from many parts of the world, who wished to participate.

In particular, I express my gratitude to the Official Delegations from numerous countries, as well as to the representatives of Churches and Ecclesial Communities and other religions.

I extend a warm welcome to the thousands of pilgrims who have come from every continent for the Jubilee of Confraternities. Dear brothers and sisters, I thank you for keeping the great heritage of popular piety alive!

During Mass, I strongly felt the spiritual presence of Pope Francis accompanying us from heaven. Reflecting on our participation in the communion of saints, I recall that yesterday in Chambéry, France, the priest Camille Costa de Beauregard, was beatified.

He lived from the end of the 1800s to the beginning of the 1900s, and was a witness of great pastoral charity.

In the joy of faith and communion, we cannot forget our brothers and sisters who are suffering because of war. In Gaza, the surviving children, families and elderly are reduced to starvation. In Myanmar, new hostilities have cut short innocent young lives. Finally, war-torn Ukraine awaits negotiations for a just and lasting peace.

Therefore, as we entrust to Mary the service of the Bishop of Rome, Pastor of the universal Church, let us, from the "Barque of Peter," look to her, Star of the Sea, Our Lady of Good Counsel, as a sign of hope. We implore her intercession for the gift of peace, for support and comfort for those who suffer, and for the grace for all of us to be witnesses to the Risen Lord.

**23. REGINA CAELI**  
**Saint Peter's Square**  
**Sunday, 25 May 2025**

Dear brothers and sisters, happy Sunday!

I am still at the beginning of my ministry among you. Before all else, I would like to thank you for your demonstration of affection and ask you to keep supporting me with your prayers and closeness.

In whatever the Lord calls us to do, in both our daily lives and our journey of faith, there are times when we feel inadequate. Yet this Sunday's Gospel (cf. Jn 14:23-29) tells us not to rely on our own abilities but on the mercy of the Lord who has chosen us, and to be certain that the Holy Spirit guides us and teaches us all things.

On the eve of the Master's death, the Apostles, in their bewilderment and distress, wondered how they were to continue to bear witness to the kingdom of God. Jesus then spoke to them of the gift of the Holy Spirit. He made this wonderful promise: "Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them" (v. 23).

In this way, Jesus freed the disciples from their anxiety, telling them: "Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid" (v. 27). For if we remain in his love, he comes to dwell in us and our life will become a temple of God. His love enlightens us, influences the way we think and act, spreads outwards to others and embraces every situation in our lives.

This dwelling of God within us, brothers and sisters, is precisely the gift of the Holy Spirit, who takes us by the hand and enables us to experience God's presence and closeness amid our daily lives, for he makes us his home.

It is wonderful to think that, when we consider our individual calling, the situations we encounter and the people entrusted to our care, our commitments and responsibilities, and our service in the Church, each of us can say with confidence: "Despite my weakness, the Lord is not ashamed of my humanity. Instead, he comes to dwell within me. He accompanies me with his Spirit; he enlightens me and makes me an instrument of his love for others, for society and for the world."

Dear friends, on the basis of that promise, let us walk in the joy born of faith, in order to become a holy temple of the Lord. Let us resolve to bring his love everywhere, never forgetting that each of our sisters and brothers is a dwelling place of God and that his presence is manifested above all in the little ones, in the poor and the suffering, who ask us to be thoughtful and compassionate Christians.

And let us entrust ourselves to the intercession of Mary Most Holy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, she became “a dwelling-place consecrated to God.” With her, may we too come to know the joy of welcoming the Lord into our lives and of being signs and instruments of his love.

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#### Post-Regina Caeli Remarks of the Holy Father

Dear brothers and sisters!

Yesterday in Poznań (Poland), Stanislaus Kostka Streich, a diocesan priest killed in hatred of the faith in 1938 because his work on behalf of the poor and workers irritated followers of the Communist ideology, was beatified. May his example inspire priests in particular to give themselves generously in the service of the Gospel and their brothers and sisters.

Also yesterday, on the liturgical Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary Help of Christians, we celebrated the Day of Prayer for the Church in China, established by Pope Benedict XVI. In churches and shrines throughout China and around the world, prayers were offered to God as a sign of concern and affection for Chinese Catholics and their communion with the universal Church. May the intercession of Mary Most Holy obtain for them, and for us, the grace to be strong and joyful witnesses of the Gospel, even in the midst of trials, so that we may always promote peace and harmony.

With these sentiments, our prayer embraces all those peoples suffering because of war. Let us implore courage and perseverance for those engaged in dialogue and in the sincere search for peace.

Ten years ago, Pope Francis signed the Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*, devoted to care for our common home. It has had an extraordinary impact, inspiring countless initiatives and teaching everyone to listen to the two-

fold cry of the Earth and of the poor. I greet and encourage the Laudato Si' movement and all those who carry on this commitment.

I greet all of you who have come from Italy and from many other parts of the world, especially the pilgrims from Valencia and Poland, with a blessing for those who in Poland are taking part in the great pilgrimage to the Marian Shrine of Piekary Śląskie. My greeting also goes to the faithful from Pescara, Sortino, Paternò, Caltagirone, Massarosa Nord, Malnate Palagonia and Cerello, as well as to those from the parish of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary in Rome. I greet the confirmands from the Archdiocese of Genoa, San Teodoro, in the Diocese of Tempio-Ampurias, and the cyclists from Paderno Dugnano and the Bersaglieri from Palermo.

I wish everyone a happy Sunday!

**24. REGINA CAELI**  
**St Peter's Square**  
**Sunday, 8 June 2025**

Before concluding this celebration, I affectionately greet all of you who have participated, and also those following it through the media.

I thank the cardinals and bishops present, and all the representatives of ecclesial movements, associations and new communities. Dear sisters and brothers, with the strength of the Holy Spirit, set out renewed by your Jubilee. Go and bring the hope of the Lord Jesus to everyone!

In Italy, and in other countries, the school year is drawing to a close. I would like to greet young people and all students and their teachers, especially the students taking exams at the end of their studies in the coming days.

Now, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, let us ask from the Holy Spirit the gift of peace. First of all, peace in our hearts, for only a peaceful heart can spread peace in the family, society and international relations. May the Spirit of the risen Christ open paths of reconciliation wherever there is war; may he enlighten those who govern and give them the courage to make gestures of de-escalation and dialogue.

**25.ANGELUS**  
**Saint Peter's Square**  
**Sunday, 15 June 2025**

Dear brothers and sisters, good day!

We have just concluded the Eucharistic celebration for the Jubilee of Sport, and now I would like to say a word to all of you, athletes of every age and background. I encourage you always to participate in sports, including competitive sports, with a spirit of generosity, and to see them as “re-creation,” in the noblest sense, for by engaging in this wholesome pastime we in some sense resemble our Creator.

I think it is important to emphasize that sport is a means of building peace, since, as a training-ground of fairness and respect for others, it fosters a culture of encounter and fraternity. Sisters and brothers, I encourage you always to keep this in mind, opposing all forms of violence and bullying.

The world today is in need of this message. There is currently so much armed conflict. In Myanmar, fighting persists despite the ceasefire, causing damage also to civilian infrastructures. I invite all parties to engage in inclusive dialogue, the only path that can lead to a peaceful and enduring solution.

During the night between 13 and 14 June, a terrible massacre took place in the city of Yelwata, located in the local administrative area of Gouman, in the state of Benue, Nigeria. Around two hundred people were killed with extreme cruelty. The majority of those killed were internally displaced people who were being housed at a local Catholic mission. I pray that security, justice and peace prevail in Nigeria, a beloved country that has suffered various forms of violence. I pray in particular for the rural Christian communities in the state of Benue, who have unceasingly been victims of violence.

My thoughts also turn to the Republic of Sudan, torn apart by violence for over two years now. I was saddened to receive the news of the death of Father Luke Jumu, parish priest of El Fasher, who was a victim of a recent bombing. I offer the assurance of my prayers for him and all the victims, and I renew my appeal to warring parties to stop the violence, protect civilians and engage in dialogue for peace. I also urge the international community to intensify efforts to provide at least essential

assistance to the people, who have been severely affected by this grave humanitarian crisis.

Let us continue to pray for peace in the Middle East, in Ukraine and throughout the world.

This afternoon, in the Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Walls, Floribert Bwana Chui, a young Congolese martyr, will be beatified. He was killed at the age of twenty-six because, as a Christian, he stood up to injustice and defended the vulnerable and the poor. May his witness grant courage and hope to the young people of the Democratic Republic of Congo and in all of Africa!

Have a wonderful Sunday! And to the young people: I look forward to seeing you in a month and a half at the Jubilee of Youth! May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Peace, intercede for us.

Angelus Domini...

**26. ANGELUS**  
**Saint Peter's Square**  
**Sunday, 22 June 2025**

Dear brothers and sisters, happy Sunday!

Today, in many countries, the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, Corpus Christi, is being celebrated, and the Gospel recounts the miracle of the loaves and fishes (cf. Lk 9:11-17).

In order to feed the thousands of people who came to listen to him and to ask for healing, Jesus invited the Apostles to bring him what little they had; he then blessed the loaves and fishes, and told them to distribute them to everyone. The result was astonishing: not only did everyone receive enough food, but there was an abundance left over (cf. Lk 9:17).

Beyond being a marvel, the miracle is a “sign” that reminds us that God’s gifts, even the smallest, grow whenever they are shared.

Reading this on the day of Corpus Christi, however, leads us to reflect on

an even deeper reality. For we know that at the root of every human sharing lies a greater sharing that precedes it, namely God's sharing with us.

He, the Creator, who gave us life, in order to save us asked one of his creatures to be his mother, to give him a fragile, limited, mortal body like ours, entrusting himself to her as a child. In this way, he shared our poverty to the utmost limits, choosing to use the little we could offer him in order to redeem us (cf. Nicholas Cabasilas, *The Life in Christ*, IV, 3).

Let us think of how wonderful it is when we give a gift — even a small one, proportionate to our means — and see that it is appreciated by the recipient; how happy we are when the gift, despite its simplicity, unites us even more to those we love.

Indeed, what happens between us and God through the Eucharist is precisely that the Lord welcomes, sanctifies and blesses the bread and wine that we place on the altar, together with the offering of our lives, and he transforms them into the Body and Blood of Christ, the sacrifice of love for the salvation of the world.

God unites himself to us by joyfully accepting what we bring, and he invites us to unite ourselves to him by likewise joyfully receiving and sharing his gift of love. In this way, says Saint Augustine, “just as one loaf is made from single grains collected together... so in the same way the body of Christ is made one by the harmony of charity” (Serm. 229/A, 2).

Dear friends, this evening we will take part in the Eucharistic Procession. We will celebrate Holy Mass together and then set out, carrying the Blessed Sacrament through the streets of our city.

We will sing, pray and finally gather in front of the Basilica of Saint Mary Major to implore the Lord's blessing on our homes, our families and all humanity. May this celebration be a sign of our daily commitment to set out from the altar and the tabernacle, going forth as bearers of communion and peace for others, in a spirit of solidarity and charity.

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After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

Alarming news continues to emerge from the Middle East, especially from Iran. Against this tragic backdrop, which includes Israel and Palestine, people's daily suffering, especially in Gaza and the other territories, where the need for adequate humanitarian aid is becoming increasingly urgent, risks being forgotten.

Today more than ever, humanity cries out and calls for peace. This is a cry that requires responsibility and reason, and it must not be drowned out by the din of weapons or the rhetoric that incites conflict.

Every member of the international community has a moral responsibility to stop the tragedy of war before it becomes an irreparable chasm. There are no "distant" conflicts when human dignity is at stake.

War does not solve problems; on the contrary, it amplifies them and inflicts deep wounds on the history of peoples, which take generations to heal. No armed victory can compensate for the pain of mothers, the fear of children, or stolen futures.

May diplomacy silence the weapons! May nations chart their futures with works of peace, not with violence and bloodstained conflicts!

I greet all of you, people of Rome and pilgrims! I am pleased to welcome the parliamentarians and mayors here present on the occasion of the Jubilee of Governments.

I greet the faithful from Bogotá and Sampués in Colombia; those from Poland, including students and teachers from a technical institute in Krakow; the Strengberg Music Band from Austria; the faithful from Hannover, Germany; the confirmandi from Gioia Tauro and the young people from Tempio Pausania.

I wish everyone a happy Sunday, and I bless those who are actively participating in the feast of Corpus Christi today, including those who are singing, playing music, decorating with flowers, displaying crafts and, above all, praying and taking part in the procession. Thanks to you all, and have a good Sunday!

**27.ANGELUS**  
**Saint Peter's Square**  
**Sunday, 29 June 2025**

Dear brothers and sisters, happy Sunday!

Today is the great feast of the Church of Rome, which was born of the witness of the Apostles Peter and Paul, and made fruitful by the outpouring of their blood and that of many martyrs. Even today, throughout the world, there continue to be Christians whom the Gospel inspires to be generous and courageous even to the sacrifice of their lives. We can speak of an ecumenism of blood, an unseen yet profound unity among Christian Churches that are not yet in full and visible communion. I would like to confirm on this solemn feast that my episcopal ministry is at the service of unity, and that the Church of Rome is committed by the blood shed by Saints Peter and Paul to serving in love the communion of all Churches.

The rock from which Peter received his name is Jesus Christ. He is the rock rejected by the builders, whom God made the cornerstone. This very Square, and the Papal Basilicas of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, are a sign of how that reversal continues in our own day. They are located on the outskirts of the city, "Outside the Walls," as we say even today. What appears great and glorious to us today, was originally rejected and excluded because it ran counter to the thinking of this world. Those who follow Jesus must tread the path of the Beatitudes, where poverty of spirit, meekness, mercy, hunger and thirst for justice, and peace-making are often met with opposition and even persecution. Yet God's glory shines forth in his friends and continues to shape them along the way, passing from conversion to conversion.

Dear brothers and sisters, at the tombs of the Apostles, which have been the object of pilgrimage for almost two thousand years, we come to realize that we too can pass from conversion to conversion. The New Testament does not conceal the errors, conflicts and sins of those whom we venerate as the greatest Apostles. Their greatness was shaped by forgiveness. The risen Lord reached out to them more than once, to put them back on the right path. Jesus never calls just one time. That is why we can always hope. The Jubilee is itself a reminder of this.

Unity in the Church and among the Churches, dear sisters and brothers, is fostered by forgiveness and mutual trust, beginning with our families

and communities. If Jesus can trust us, we can certainly trust one another in his name. May the Apostles Peter and Paul, together with the Virgin Mary, intercede for us, so that in this, our wounded world, the Church may always be a home and school of communion.

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After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

I offer the assurance of my prayers for the Barthélémy Boganda High School community in Bangui, Central African Republic, which is in mourning following the tragic accident that caused numerous deaths and injuries among the students. May the Lord comfort the families and the entire community!

I extend my greetings to all of you, especially the faithful of Rome on the feast of your patron saints! My thoughts affectionately turn to the parish priests and all the priests who work in the parishes of Rome. I offer my gratitude and encouragement for their service.

This feast also marks the annual Peter's Pence collection, which is a sign of communion with the Pope and participation in his apostolic ministry. I heartily thank all those who, with their gifts, support my first steps as the Successor of Peter.

I bless all those taking part in the "Quo Vadis?" event, occurring in the Roman places connected to Saints Peter and Paul. I would like to thank those who have worked hard to organize this initiative, as it helps to promote and honour the patron saints of Rome.

I greet the faithful from various countries who have accompanied their Metropolitan Archbishops who received the Pallium today. I greet the pilgrims from Ukraine — I always pray for the Ukrainian people — from Mexico, Croatia, Poland, the United States of America, Venezuela, Brazil, the Saints Peter and Paul Choir from Indonesia, as well as numerous Eritrean faithful living in Europe; the groups from Martina Franca, Pontedera, San Vendemiano and Corbetta; the altar servers from Santa Giustina in Colle and the young people from Sommariva del Bosco.

I thank the Pro Loco of Rome and the artists who created the flower

display in the Via della Conciliazione and Piazza Pio XII. Thank you!

I greet the Guanellian Collaborators of Central and Southern Italy, the Chiari Volunteer Association, the cyclists from Fermo and Varese, the Aniene 80 sports group and the pilgrims from “Connessione Spirituale”.

Sisters and brothers, let us continue to pray that weapons may be silenced everywhere and that peace may be achieved through dialogue.

Happy Sunday to all!

**28. ANGELUS**  
**Saint Peter's Square**  
**Sunday, 6 July 2025**

Dear brothers and sisters, happy Sunday!

Today's Gospel (Lk 10:1-12, 17-20) reminds us of the importance of the mission to which we are all called, each according to our own vocation and in the particular situations in which the Lord has placed us.

Jesus sends out seventy-two disciples (v. 1). This symbolic number indicates that the hope of the Gospel is meant for all peoples, for such is the breadth of God's heart and the abundance of his harvest. Indeed, God continues to work in the world so that all his children may experience his love and be saved.

At the same time, Jesus says, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest” (v. 2).

On the one hand, God, like a sower, has generously gone out into the world, throughout history, and sowed in people's hearts a desire for the infinite, for a fulfilled life and for salvation that sets us free. The harvest, then, is plentiful. The Kingdom of God grows like a seed in the ground, and the women and men of today, even when seemingly overwhelmed by so many other things, still yearn for a greater truth; they search for a fuller meaning for their lives, desire justice, and carry within themselves a longing for eternal life.

On the other hand, however, there are few laborers to go out into the field sown by the Lord; few who are able to distinguish, with the eyes of

Jesus, the good grain that is ripe for harvesting (cf. Jn 4:35-38). The Lord wishes to do something great in our lives and in the history of humanity, yet there are few who perceive this, pause to receive the gift and then proclaim and share it with others.

Dear brothers and sisters, the Church and the world do not need people who fulfill their religious duties as if the faith were merely an external label. We need laborers who are eager to work in the mission field, loving disciples who bear witness to the Kingdom of God in all places. Perhaps there is no shortage of “intermittent Christians” who occasionally act upon some religious feeling or participate in sporadic events. But there are few who are ready, on a daily basis, to labor in God’s harvest, cultivating the seed of the Gospel in their own hearts in order then to share it in their families, places of work or study, their social contexts and with those in need.

To do this, we do not need too many theoretical ideas about pastoral plans. Instead, we need to pray to the Lord of the harvest. Priority must be given, then, to our relationship with the Lord and to cultivating our dialogue with him. In this way, he will make us his laborers and send us into the field of the world to bear witness to his Kingdom.

Let us ask the Blessed Virgin Mary, who generously gave her “yes” to participating in the work of salvation, to intercede for us and accompany us on the path of following the Lord, so that we too may become joyful laborers in God’s Kingdom.

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After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

With affection I greet all of you, faithful of Rome and pilgrims from Italy and from various countries. In the great heat of this time of year, your journey to pass through the Holy Doors is even more courageous and admirable!

In particular, I greet the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart; the pupils and parents of Strzyzow School and the faithful from Legnica in Poland; and the Greek Catholic group from Ukraine.

I also greet the pilgrims from Romano di Lombardia, Melia (Reggio Calabria), Sassari, and the Latin American community from the Archdiocese of Florence.

Greetings to the English speaking pilgrims. I would like to express sincere condolences to all the families who have lost loved ones, in particular their daughters, who were at the summer camp, in the disaster caused by flooding of the Guadalupe river in Texas in the United States. We pray for them.

Dearest friends, peace is a desire of all peoples, and it is the sorrowful cry of those torn apart by war. Let us ask the Lord to touch the hearts and inspire the minds of those who govern, that the violence of weapons be replaced by the pursuit of dialogue.

This afternoon, I will travel to Castel Gandolfo, where I intend to have a short period of rest. I hope that everyone will be able to enjoy some vacation time in order to restore both body and spirit.

I wish all of you a happy Sunday

**29. ANGELUS**  
**Liberty Square - Piazza della Libertà (Castel Gandolfo)**  
**Sunday, 13 July 2025**

Dear brothers and sisters,

Happy Sunday! Today's Gospel begins with a great question posed to Jesus: "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" (Lk 10:25). Those words express a constant desire in our life: our yearning for salvation, for an existence free from failure, evil and death.

This hope of the human heart is described as something to be "inherited", not something to be gained by force, begged for, or negotiated. Eternal life, which God alone can give, is bestowed on us as an inheritance, as parents do with their children.

That is why Jesus tells us that, in order to receive God's gift, we must do his will. It is written in the Law: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart," and "your neighbour as yourself" (Lk 10:27; cfr Deut 6:5; Lev 19:18). When we do these two things, we respond to the Father's love.

God's will is the law of life that the Father himself was the first to follow, by loving us unconditionally in his Son, Jesus.

Brothers and sisters, let us look to Jesus! He shows us the meaning of authentic love for God and for others. It is a love that is generous, not possessive; a love that forgives without question; a love that reaches out and never abandons others. In Christ, God made himself a neighbour to each and every man and woman.

That is why each of us can and should become a neighbour to all whom we meet. Imitating the example of Jesus, the Saviour of the world, we too are called to bring consolation and hope, above all to those who are experiencing discouragement and disappointment.

In order to live eternally, we do not need to cheat death, but to serve life, by caring for others in this, our time together. That is the supreme law that is prior to all society's rules and gives them their meaning.

Let us ask the Virgin Mary, Mother of Mercy, to help us to open our hearts to God's will, which is always a will of saving love. In this way, we will become artisans of peace every day of our lives.

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After the Angelus:

Dear brothers and sisters,

I am pleased to be with you here in Castel Gandolfo. I greet the civil and military authorities present and thank all of you for your warm welcome.

Yesterday, in Barcelona, Lycarion May (whose secular name was François Benjamin), a friar of the Institute of the Marist Brothers of the Schools, who was killed in 1909 out of hatred for the faith, was beatified. In hostile circumstances, he lived his educational and pastoral mission with dedication and courage. May the heroic witness of this martyr be an inspiration to all of us, especially those who work for the education of young people.

I greet the participants in the summer course of the Liturgical Academy from Poland, and likewise think of the Polish pilgrims who are taking

part in today's annual pilgrimage to the shrine of Czestochowa.

Today marks the end of the Jubilee pilgrimage of the Diocese of Bergamo. I greet the pilgrims who, together with their Bishop, have come to Rome to pass through the Holy Door.

I greet the pastoral community of Blessed Augustine of Tarano from the Colegio S. Augustin in Chiclayo, Peru, also here in Rome to celebrate the Jubilee. I greet the pilgrims from the parish of San Pedro Apóstol in the Diocese of Alcalá de Henares, who are celebrating the 400th anniversary of the parish's foundation; the Legionaries of Mary from Uribia-La Guajira, Colombia; the members of the Family of Merciful Love; the Agesci Alcamo 1st Scout Group; and, finally, the Augustinian nuns in formation here present.

We welcome the children's choir of the Académie Musicale de Liesse, from France. Thank you for your presence and for your commitment to singing and music.

Here with us today are 100 cadets from the Carabinieri course at the Velletri School, named after Venerable Salvo D'Acquisto. I greet the Commander, together with the officers and non-commissioned officers, and encourage you to continue your training in the service of your country and civil society. Thank you! Let us applaud them enthusiastically for their service.

During the summer months, there are many initiatives involving children and young people, and I would like to thank the educators and animators who dedicate themselves to this service.

In this context, I wish to mention the important initiative of the Giffoni Film Festival, which brings together young people from all over the world, and whose theme this year is "Becoming Human".

Brothers and sisters, let us not forget to pray for peace and for all those who, because of violence or war, find themselves in a state of suffering and need.

I wish all of you a happy Sunday!

**30.ANGELUS**  
**Piazza della Libertà (Castel Gandolfo)**  
**Sunday, 20 July 2025**

Dear brothers and sisters, happy Sunday!

Today's liturgy invites us to reflect on the hospitality shown by Abraham and his wife Sarah, and later by the sisters Martha and Mary, who were friends of Jesus (cf. Gen 18:1-10; Lk 10:38-42). Every time we are invited to the Lord's Supper and share in the Eucharistic meal, it is God himself who "comes to serve us" (cf. Lk 12:37). Yet God first knew what it was to be a guest, and today as well, he stands at our door and knocks (cf. Rev 3:20). In Italian, the same word can mean both "guest" and "host." On this summer Sunday, let us reflect on this interplay of giving and receiving hospitality, for without it our lives are impoverished.

Humility is needed to offer hospitality, but also to receive it. It also takes courtesy, attentiveness and openness. In the Gospel, Martha risks missing out on some of the joy of this exchange. She is so caught up in preparing to welcome Jesus that she nearly spoils a unique moment of encounter. Martha is a generous person, but our Lord calls her to something more than generosity alone. He calls her to leave her preparations behind and to come and spend time with him.

Dear brothers and sisters, our lives can only flourish if we learn to be open to something greater than ourselves, something that brings us happiness and fulfillment. Martha complains that her sister has left her alone to serve (cf. v. 40), but Mary is completely caught up in Jesus' words. She is no less practical than her sister, nor less generous, but she recognized what was most important. That is why Jesus chides Martha. She was missing an opportunity to share in a moment that would have brought her great joy (cf. vv. 41-42).

The summer season can help us learn how to slow down and become more like Mary than Martha. Sometimes we too fail to choose the better part. We need to take time to rest and try to learn better the art of hospitality. The holiday industry wants to sell us all sorts of "experiences," but perhaps not the ones we are really looking for. Every genuine encounter is free; it cannot be bought, whether it is an encounter with God, with others or with nature. We need only learn the art of hospitality, which includes both welcoming others and allowing ourselves to

be welcomed. We have much to receive, not only to give. Abraham and Sarah, despite their advanced years, found themselves being parents after they welcomed the Lord himself in the three visitors. We too have so much life ahead of us, remaining to be welcomed and embraced.

Let us pray to Mary Most Holy, our Mother, who welcomed our Lord, bore him in her womb, and together with Joseph gave him a home. In her, we see the beauty of our own vocation, the vocation of the Church, to be a home open to all and in this way to welcome her Lord, who knocks at our door and asks our permission to enter.

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After the Angelus prayer

Dear brothers and sisters,

This morning I celebrated the Eucharist in the Cathedral of Albano. It was a significant moment of ecclesial communion and encounter with the diocesan community. I thank His Excellency Bishop Viva who is present here and all those who worked to organise this beautiful celebration. I offer my best wishes to the entire diocesan community!

Tragic news continues to arrive in these days from the Middle East, especially from Gaza.

I express my profound sadness regarding last Thursday's attack by the Israeli army on the Catholic Parish of the Holy Family in Gaza City, which as you know killed three Christians and gravely wounded others. I pray for the victims, Saad Issa Kostandi Salameh, Foumia Issa Latif Ayyad, Najwa Ibrahim Latif Abu Daoud, and I am particularly close to their families and to all the parishioners. Sadly, this act adds to the continuous military attacks against the civilian population and places of worship in Gaza.

I again call for an immediate halt to the barbarism of the war and for a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

I renew my appeal to the international community to observe humanitarian law and to respect the obligation to protect civilians, as well as the prohibition of collective punishment, the indiscriminate use of force and the forced displacement of the population.

To our beloved Middle Eastern Christians I say: I deeply sympathise with your feeling that you can do little in the face of this grave situation. You are in the heart of the Pope and of the whole Church. Thank you for your witness of faith. May the Virgin Mary, woman of the Levant, dawn of the new Sun that has risen in history, protect you always and accompany the world towards the dawn of peace.

I greet all of you, faithful of Castel Gandolfo and all of the pilgrims present here.

I greet the young participants of the pilgrimage organised by the Catholic Worldview Fellowship, who are visiting Rome after several weeks of prayer and formation.

I thank the International Forum of Catholic Action for promoting the “Prayer Marathon for Leaders”: the invitation, addressed to each one of us, is to pause today between 10 am to 10 pm to pray for just one minute, asking the Lord to enlighten our leaders and inspire in them projects for peace.

In these weeks, some families of the Focolare movement are in Loppiano for the “International School of New Families.” I pray that this experience of spirituality and fraternity will make you firm in the faith and joyful in the spiritual accompaniment of other families.

I greet the students, teachers and staff of the Catholic Institute of Technology, which has its headquarters here in Castel Gandolfo. I greet the Agesci Gela 3 Scout Group, engaged in the Jubilee pilgrimage that will end before the tomb of Blessed Carlo Acutis. I also greet the young people of Castello di Godego, who are engaged in a service experience with Caritas of Rome, and I greet the faithful of Palermo and those of Sarsina.

Also present are the members of the folkloristic group “O Stazzo,” as well as the musical band of Alba de Tormes.

In a few days I will return to the Vatican, after these two weeks that I have stayed here in Castel Gandolfo. I would like to thank all of you for your hospitality and wish all of you a happy Sunday!

**31. ANGELUS**  
**Saint Peter's Square**  
**Sunday, 27 July 2025**

Dear brothers and sisters, happy Sunday!

Today's Gospel presents Jesus teaching his disciples the Our Father (cf. Lk 11:1-13). This is the prayer that unites all Christians, in which the Lord invites us to address God as "Abba," "Father," with childlike "simplicity, filial trust... boldness, the certainty of being loved" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2778).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church expresses this very well: "Thus the Lord's Prayer reveals us to ourselves at the same time that it reveals the Father to us" (ibid., 2783). Indeed, how true this is, for the more we pray with confidence to our heavenly Father, the more we discover that we are beloved children and the more we come to know the greatness of his love (cf. Rom 8:14-17).

Today's Gospel goes on to describe the characteristics of God's fatherhood through vivid images: that of a man who gets up in the middle of the night to assist a friend in welcoming an unexpected visitor; and that of a parent who is concerned about giving good things to his children.

These images remind us that God never turns his back on us when we come to him, even if we arrive late to knock at his door, perhaps after mistakes, missed opportunities, failures, or even if, in order to welcome us, he has to "wake up" his children who are sleeping at home (cf. Lk 11:7). Indeed, in the great family of the Church, the Father does not hesitate to make us all participants in each of his loving gestures. The Lord always listens to us when we pray to him. If he sometimes responds in ways or at times that are difficult to understand, it is because he acts with wisdom and providence, which are beyond our understanding. Even in these moments, then, let us not cease to pray — and pray with confidence — for in him we will always find light and strength.

When we recite the Our Father, in addition to celebrating the grace of being children of God, we also express our commitment to responding to this gift by loving one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. Reflecting on this, one of the Fathers of the Church wrote: "We must remember... and know that when we call God 'our Father' we ought to behave as children of God" (Saint Cyprian of Carthage, *De Dom. orat.*, 11), and another adds: "You cannot call the God of all kindness your Father if you

preserve a cruel and inhuman heart; for in this case you no longer have in you the mark of the heavenly Father's kindness" (Saint John Chrysostom, *De orat. Dom.*, 3). We cannot pray to God as "Father" and then be harsh and insensitive towards others. Instead, it is important to let ourselves be transformed by his goodness, his patience, his mercy, so that his face may be reflected in ours as in a mirror.

Dear brothers and sisters, today's liturgy invites us, through prayer and charity, to feel loved and to love as God loves us: with openness, discretion, mutual concern, and without deceit. Let us ask Mary to help us respond to this call, so that we may manifest the sweetness of the Father's face.

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After the Angelus prayer

Dear brothers and sisters,

Today we celebrate the Fifth World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly, centred on the theme: "Blessed are those who have not lost hope." Let us look to grandparents and the elderly as witnesses of hope, capable of showing the path for new generations. Let us not leave them alone, but instead, form a bond of love and prayer with them.

My heart is close to all those who are suffering due to conflict and violence throughout the world. In particular, I pray for those affected by the clashes along the border between Thailand and Cambodia, especially displaced children and families. May the Prince of Peace inspire everyone to seek dialogue and reconciliation.

I also pray for the victims of violence in southern Syria.

I am following with great concern the dire humanitarian situation in Gaza, where the civilian population is suffering from severe hunger and remains exposed to violence and death. I renew my heartfelt appeal for a ceasefire, the release of hostages, and the full respect of humanitarian law.

Every human person possesses an inherent dignity, bestowed by God himself. I urge all parties involved in conflicts to recognize this dignity and to end every action that violates it. I call for negotiations aimed

at securing a future of peace for all peoples, and for the rejection of anything that might jeopardize it.

I entrust to Mary, Queen of Peace, the innocent victims of conflicts and those leaders who have the power to resolve them.

I greet those from Vatican Radio/Vatican News, which, to be closer to the faithful and pilgrims during the Jubilee Year, has inaugurated a small station under Bernini's colonnade together with L'Osservatore Romano. Thank you for your service in many languages, which brings the Pope's voice to the world. And thank you to all journalists who contribute to the communication of peace and truth.

I greet all of you who have come from Italy and from many parts of the world, in particular the grandparents from San Cataldo, the young Capuchin friars of Europe, the Confirmation candidates from the parish cluster of Grantorto-Carturo, the youth from Montecarlo di Lucca, and the Scouts of Licata.

I greet with particular affection the young people from various countries who have gathered in Rome for the Jubilee of Youth. I hope that this will be an opportunity for each of you to encounter Christ, and to be strengthened by him in your faith and in your commitment to following Christ with integrity of life.

[In English:] I greet the faithful from Kearny (New Jersey), the Catholic Music Award group and the EWTN Summer Academy. I also greet with particular affection the young people from various countries who have gathered in Rome for the Jubilee of Youth, which begins tomorrow. I hope that this will be an opportunity for each of you to encounter Christ, and to be strengthened by him in your faith and in your commitment to following Christ with integrity of life.

[In Spanish:] I greet with particular affection the young people from various countries who have gathered in Rome for the Jubilee of Youth. I hope that this will be an opportunity for each of you to encounter Christ, and to be strengthened by him in your faith and in your commitment to following Christ with integrity of life.

This evening, the "Madonna Fiumarola" procession will take place on the Tiber River. May all who take part in this beautiful Marian tradition learn from the Mother of Jesus how to live the Gospel in their daily lives! I wish

you all a blessed Sunday!

**32. ANGELUS**  
**Saint Peter's Square**  
**Sunday, 3 August 2025**

Dear friends,

The Lord Jesus is present among us and within us: all things and all people in the Eucharist. United with him, we wish to offer up a huge “thank you” to the Father for the gift of these days of your Jubilee. It has been an outpouring of grace for the Church and for the whole world! This has been possible through the participation of each one of you. For this, I wish to thank each of you, with all my heart. In particular I am thinking of the two young pilgrims, Maria and Pascale, one Spanish and the other Egyptian, who have passed away in these days. I entrust them to the Lord. I thank the bishops, priests, religious men and women, and educators who accompanied you and all those who prayed for this event and participated spiritually.

In communion with Christ, our peace and hope for the world, we are closer than ever to young people who suffer the most serious evils, which are caused by other human beings. We are with the young people of Gaza, we are with the young people of Ukraine, with those of every land bloodied by war. My young brothers and sisters, you are the sign that a different world is possible: a world of fraternity and friendship, where conflicts are not resolved with weapons but with dialogue.

Yes, with Christ it is possible! With his love, with his forgiveness, and with the power of his Spirit. My dear friends, united to Jesus, like branches to the vine, you will bear much fruit. You will be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. You will be seeds of hope where you live, in your families, among your friends, at school, at work, and in sports. You will be seeds of hope with Christ, our hope.

After this Jubilee, the “pilgrimage of hope” of young people continues and will take us to Asia! I renew the invitation that Pope Francis extended in Lisbon two years ago. Young people from all over the world will gather together with the Successor of Peter to celebrate World Youth Day in Seoul, Korea, from 3 to 8 August 2027. The theme will be “Take courage! I have overcome the world!” (Jn 16:33). It is precisely the hope that dwells in our hearts that gives us the strength to proclaim the victory of the risen Christ over evil and death; and you, young pilgrims of

hope, will be witnesses of this to the ends of the earth! I look forward to seeing you in Seoul: let us continue to dream together and to hope together.

Let us entrust ourselves to the maternal protection of the Virgin Mary.

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Words of His Holiness Pope Leo XIV to Young People following Holy Mass  
- Jubilee of Youth

Dear young people, I would like to offer a few final words.

Thank you again to all of you! Thank you for the music, thank you to everyone who worked to prepare so many things during this week for this Jubilee.

We have already said that the next gathering will be in Korea. A round of applause to the many Koreans in attendance!

I ask you also to bring greetings to the many young people who could not be here with us, in so many countries where it was impossible to leave. There are places from where young people could not come here, for reasons that we know.

Bring this joy, this enthusiasm to the whole world. You are salt of the earth and the light of the world! Take this greeting to all of your friends, to all of the young people who need a message of hope.

Again, thank you to all of you! And have a safe trip home

**33. GENERAL AUDIENCE**  
**Saint Peter's Square**  
**Wednesday, 21 May 2025**

Cycle of Catechesis – Jubilee 2025. Jesus Christ our Hope. II. The life of Jesus. The parables 6. The sower. He spoke to them at length in parables (Mt 13:3a)

Dear brothers and sisters,

I am pleased to welcome you in this, my first general Audience. Today I will resume the cycle of Jubilee catecheses, on the theme “Jesus Christ Our Hope”, initiated by Pope Francis.

Let us continue today to meditate on the parables of Jesus, which help us to regain hope, because they show us how God works in history. Today I would like to dwell on a parable which is somewhat peculiar, because it is a sort of introduction to all the parables. I refer to that of the sower (cf. Mt 13:1-17). In a certain sense, in this account we can recognize Jesus’ way of communicating, which has a great deal to teach us for proclaiming the Gospel today.

Every parable tells a story that is taken from everyday life, yet wants to tell us something more, to refer us to a deeper meaning. The parable raises questions in us; it invites us not to stop at appearances. Before the story that is told or the image that is presented to me, I can ask myself: where am I in this story? What does this image say to my life? In fact, the term “parable” comes from the Greek verb *paraballein*, which means to throw in front of. The parable throws before me a word that provokes me and prompts me to question myself.

The parable of the sower talks precisely about the dynamic of the word of God and the effects it produces. Indeed, every word of the Gospel is like a seed that is thrown on the ground of our life. Jesus uses the image of the seed many times, with different meanings. In chapter 13 of the Gospel of Matthew, the parable of the sower introduces a series of other short parables, some of which talk precisely about what is happening on the terrain: the wheat and the weeds, the mustard seed, the treasure hidden in the field. What, then, is this soil? It is our heart, but it is also the world, the community, the Church. The word of God, in fact, makes fruitful and provokes every reality.

At the beginning, we see Jesus who leaves the house and gathers a great crowd around him (cf. Mt 13:1). His word fascinates and intrigues. Among the people there are obviously many different situations. The word of Jesus is for everyone, but it works in each person in a different way. This context allows us to understand better the meaning of the parable.

A rather unusual sower goes out to sow, but does not care where the seed falls. He throws the seeds even where it is unlikely they will bear fruit: on the path, on the rocks, among the thorns. This attitude surpris-

ses the listener and induces him to ask: how come?

We are used to calculating things – and at times it is necessary – but this does not apply in love! The way in which this “wasteful” sower throws the seed is an image of the way God loves us. Indeed, it is true that the destiny of the seed depends also on the way in which the earth welcomes it and the situation in which it finds itself, but first and foremost in this parable Jesus tells us that God throws the seed of his Word on all kinds of soil, that is, in any situation of ours: at times we are more superficial and distracted, at times we let ourselves get carried away by enthusiasm, sometimes we are burdened by life’s worries, but there are also times when we are willing and welcoming. God is confident and hopes that sooner or later the seed will blossom. This is how he loves us: he does not wait for us to become the best soil, but he always generously gives us his word. Perhaps by seeing that he trusts us, the desire to be better soil will be kindled in us. This is hope, founded on the rock of God’s generosity and mercy.

In telling the way in which the seed bears fruit, Jesus is also talking about his life. Jesus is the Word, he is the Seed. And the seed, to bear fruit, must die. Thus, this parable tells us that God is ready to “waste away” for us and that Jesus is willing to die in order to transform our life.

I have in mind that beautiful painting by Van Gogh, *The sower at sunset*. That image of the sower in the blazing sun also speaks to me of the farmer’s toil. And it strikes me that, behind the sower, Van Gogh depicted the grain already ripe. It seems to me an image of hope: one way or another, the seed has borne fruit. We are not sure how, but it has. At the centre of the scene, however, is not the sower, who stands to the side; instead, the whole painting is dominated by the image of the sun, perhaps to remind us that it is God who moves history, even if he sometimes seems absent or distant. It is the sun that warms the clods of earth and makes the seed ripen.

Dear brothers and sisters, in what situation of life today is the Word of God reaching us? Let us ask the Lord for the grace always to welcome this seed that is his Word. And if we realize we are not a fruitful soil, let us not be discouraged, but let us ask him to work on us more to make us become a better terrain.

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## APPEAL

The situation in the Gaza Strip is increasingly worrying and painful. I renew my heartfelt appeal to allow the entry of dignified humanitarian aid and to put an end to the hostilities, the heart-rending price of which is being paid by children, the elderly and the sick.

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Special greetings:

I welcome the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors, especially those from England, Ireland, Hungary, Norway, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania, Australia, New Zealand, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, the Philippines, South Korea, Vietnam, Canada, and the United States. I greet in particular the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Annecy, the Pallottine Missionary Sisters of the Catholic Apostolate, the Daughters of Saint Jerome Emiliani, the Couples For Christ group, the pilgrims from the Diocese of Kerry, and an International group of young volunteers from Saint Casian's Centre. With prayerful good wishes that the present Jubilee of Hope may be for you and your families a time of grace and spiritual renewal, I invoke upon you all the joy and peace of the Lord Jesus.

### **34. GENERAL AUDIENCE Saint Peter's Square Wednesday, 28 May 2025**

Cycle of Catechesis – Jubilee 2025. Jesus Christ our Hope. II. The life of Jesus. The parables 7. “Jesus Christ our hope. The Samaritan. When he saw him, he had compassion” (Lk 10:33b)

Dear brothers and sisters,

We will continue to meditate on some parables of the Gospel, which are an opportunity to change perspective and open ourselves up to hope. The lack of hope, at times, is due to the fact that we fixate on a certain rigid and closed way of seeing things, and the parables help us to look at them from another point of view.

Today I would like to talk to you about an expert, knowledgeable person, a doctor of the Law, who however needs to change his perspective, because he is concentrated on himself and does not notice others (cf.

Lk 10:25-37). Indeed, he questions Jesus on the way in which eternal life is “inherited”, using an expression that intends it as an unequivocal right. But behind this question perhaps it is precisely the need for attention that is concealed: the only word he asks Jesus to explain is the term “neighbour”, which literally means he who is near.

Jesus therefore tells a parable that is a path for transforming that question, to pass from who loves me? to who has loved? The first is an immature question, the second is the question of an adult who has understood the meaning of his life. The first question is the one we ask when we sit in the corner and wait, the second is the one that drives us to set out on the path.

The parable that Jesus tells has, in fact, a road as its setting, and it is a difficult and impervious road, like life. It is the road travelled by a man going down from Jerusalem, the city on the mountain, to Jericho, the city below sea level. It is an image that already foreshadows what might happen: it happens that the man is attacked, beaten, robbed and left half dead. It is the experience that happens when situations, people, sometimes even those we have trusted, take everything from us and leave us in the middle of the road.

However, life is made up of encounters, and in these encounters, we emerge for what we are. We find ourselves in front of others, faced with their fragility and weakness, and we can decide what to do: to take care of them or pretend nothing is wrong. A priest and a Levite go down that same road. They are people who serve in the Temple of Jerusalem, who live in the sacred space. And yet, the practice of worship does not automatically lead to being compassionate. Indeed, before being a religious matter, compassion is a question of humanity! Before being believers, we are called to be human.

We can imagine that, after staying a long time in Jerusalem, that priest and that Levite are in a hurry to return home. It is indeed haste, so present in our lives, that very often prevents us from feeling compassion. Those who think that their own journey must take precedence are not willing to stop for another.

But here comes someone who is actually able to stop: he is a Samaritan, hence a person belonging to a despised people (cf. 2 Kings 17). In his case, the text does not specify the direction, but only says that he was travelling. Religiosity does not enter into this. This Samaritan simply

stops because he is a man faced with another man in need of help.

Compassion is expressed through practical gestures. The Evangelist Luke ponders the actions of the Samaritan, whom we call “good”, but in the text he is simply a person: a Samaritan approaches, because if you want to help someone, you cannot think of keeping your distance, you have to get involved, get dirty, perhaps be contaminated; he binds the wounds after cleaning them with oil and wine; he loads him onto his horse, taking on the burden, because one who truly helps if one is willing to feel the weight of the other’s pain; he takes him to an inn where he spends money, “two silver coins”, more or less two days of work; and he undertakes to return and eventually pay more, because the other is not a package to deliver, but someone to care for.

Dear brothers and sisters, when will we too be capable of interrupting our journey and having compassion? When we understand that the wounded man in the street represents each one of us. And then the memory of all the times that Jesus stopped to take care of us will make us more capable of compassion.

Let us pray, then, that we can grow in humanity, so that our relationships may be truer and richer in compassion. Let us ask the Heart of Jesus for the grace increasingly to have the same feelings as him.

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## APPEAL

In these days, my thoughts turn often to the Ukrainian people, affected by serious new attacks against civilians and infrastructure. I assure all the victims, in particular children and families, of my closeness and my prayer.

I strongly reiterate my appeal to stop the war and to support every initiative of dialogue and peace. I ask everyone to join in prayer for peace in Ukraine and wherever there is suffering because of war.

In the Gaza Strip, the cry of mothers, of fathers who clutch the lifeless bodies of children and who are continually forced to move in search of a little food and safer shelter from bombing, rises ever more intensely

to the sky.

I renew my appeal to the leaders: cease fire, release all hostages, fully respect humanitarian law. Mary Queen of Peace, pray for us.

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Special Greetings:

I am happy to welcome the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today's Audience, especially those coming from England, Scotland, Norway, Ghana, Kenya, Australia, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, Vietnam, Canada and the United States of America. As we prepare to commemorate the Lord's Ascension into Heaven, I pray that each of you and your families may experience a renewal of hope and joy. God bless you all!

**35. GENERAL AUDIENCE**  
**St. Peter's Square**  
**Wednesday, 4 June 2025**

Cycle of Catechesis – Jubilee 2025. Jesus Christ our Hope. II. The life of Jesus. The parables 8. The labourers in the vineyard. "And he said to them, 'You too go into my vineyard'" (Mt 20:4)

Dear brothers and sisters,

I would like to look at one of Jesus' parables again. Also in this case, it is a story that fosters our hope. Indeed, at times we have the impression that we cannot find meaning for our lives: we feel useless, inadequate, just like the labourers who wait in the marketplace, waiting for someone to hire them to work. But sometimes time passes, life goes by, and we do not feel acknowledged or appreciated. Perhaps we did not arrive in time, others appeared before us, or problems held us up elsewhere.

The metaphor of the marketplace is very appropriate for our times too, because the market is the place of business, where unfortunately even affection and dignity are bought and sold, in the attempt to earn something. And when we do not feel appreciated, acknowledged, we risk se-

ling ourselves to the first bidder. Instead, the Lord reminds us that our life is worthy, and his wish is to help us discover this.

Also in the parable we are commenting on today, there are labourers awaiting someone who will hire them for the day. We are at Chapter 20 of the Gospel of Matthew, and here too we find a character whose behaviour is unusual, who surprises and challenges us. He is the owner of a vineyard, who comes out in person in search of his labourers. Evidently, he wants to establish a personal relationship with them.

As I was saying, it is a parable that gives hope, because it tells us that this landowner goes out several times to go and look for those who are waiting to give meaning to their lives. The landowner goes out immediately at dawn and then, every three hours, he returns in search of workers to send to his vineyard. Following this schedule, after going out at three o'clock in the afternoon, there would be no reason to go out again, because the working day ended at six.

This tireless master, who wants at all costs to give value to the life of every one of us, instead goes out at five. The labourers who had remained in the marketplace had probably given up all hope. That day had come to nothing. Nevertheless, someone still believed in them. What point is there to take on labourers only for the last hour of the working day? And yet, even when it seems we are able to do little in life, it is always worthwhile. There is always the possibility to find meaning, because God loves our life.

And the originality of this landowner is also seen at the end of the day, at pay time. The master had agreed to pay the first workers, who go into the vineyard at dawn, one denarius, which was a typical day's wage. He tells the others he will give them what is fair. And it is right here that the parable provokes us: what is fair? For the owner of the vineyard, that is, for God, it is just that each person has what he needs to live. He called the labourers personally, he knows their dignity, and on the basis of this, he wants to pay them, and he gives all of them one denarius.

The story says that the labourers from the first hour are disappointed: they cannot see the beauty of the gesture of the landowner, who was not unjust, but simply generous; who looked not only at merit, but also at need. God wants to give his Kingdom, that is, full, eternal and happy life, to everyone. And this is what Jesus does with us: he does not establish rankings, he gives all of himself to those who open their hearts to

him.

In the light of this parable, today's Christian might be tempted to think, "Why start work immediately? If the pay is the same, why work more?". Saint Augustine responds to these doubts, saying: "Why dost thou put off him that calleth thee, certain as thou art of the reward, but uncertain of the day? Take heed then lest peradventure what he is to give thee by promise, thou take from thyself by delay". [1]

I would like to say, especially to the young, do not wait, but respond enthusiastically to the Lord who calls us to work in his vineyard. Do not delay, roll up your sleeves, because the Lord is generous and you will not be disappointed! Working in his vineyard, you will find an answer to that profound question you carry within you: what is the meaning of my life?

Dear brothers and sisters, let us not be discouraged! Even in the dark moments of life, when time passes without giving us the answers we seek, let us ask the Lord who will come out again and find us where we are waiting for him. He is generous, and he will come soon!

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[1] Sermon 87, 6, 8.

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Special greetings:

I extend a warm welcome to the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today's Audience, especially those coming from England, Scotland, Ireland, Finland, Kenya, India, Indonesia, South Korea, the Philippines and the United States of America. As we prepare to celebrate the Solemnity of Pentecost, I invoke upon you and your families a rich outpouring of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. God bless you!

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Summary of the Holy Father's words:

My dear brothers and sisters: In our continuing catechesis on the Jubilee theme of "Jesus Christ our Hope", today we reflect on Jesus' parable of the workers of the last hour (Mt 20:1-16). The landowner who gives the

same wage even to the workers of the eleventh hour is an image of God our Father, who constantly goes out to seek those who come to him. His love and generosity abundantly rewards those who, however late, respond to his invitation to share in his kingdom of full and eternal life. God never gives up on us; he is always ready to accept us and give meaning and hope to our lives, however hopeless our situation may seem and however insignificant our merits may appear. May all of us, and especially our young people, be generous and enthusiastic in responding to his call to work in his vineyard!

**36. GENERAL AUDIENCE**  
**Saint Peter's Square**  
**Wednesday, 11 June 2025**

Cycle of Catechesis – Jubilee 2025. Jesus Christ our Hope. II. The life of Jesus. The Healings. 9. Bartimaeus. ““Take courage; get up, he is calling you.”

Dear brothers and sisters,

With this catechesis I would like to bring our attention to another essential aspect of the life of Jesus, namely his healings. For this reason, I invite you to bring before the Heart of Christ your most painful and fragile parts, those places in your life where you feel stuck and blocked. Let us trustfully ask the Lord to listen to our cry, and to heal us!

The character who accompanies us in this reflection will help us to understand that we must never give up hope, even when we feel lost. He is Bartimaeus, a blind man and a beggar, whom Jesus meets in Jericho (cf. Mk 10:46-52). The place is significant: Jesus is going to Jerusalem, but he begins his journey, so to speak, in the “underworld” of Jericho, a city situated below sea level. Indeed, Jesus, with his death, went to take back that Adam who fell to the bottom and who represents each one of us.

Bartimaeus means “son of Timaeus”: the man is described through a relationship, and yet he is dramatically alone. This name, though, could also mean “son of honour” or “of admiration”, exactly the opposite of the situation in which he finds himself. [1] And since the name is so important in Jewish culture, it means that Bartimaeus fails to live up to what he is called to be.

Then, unlike the great movement of people who walk behind Jesus, Bartimaeus is still. The Evangelist says that he is sitting by the roadside, and so he needs someone to lift him up onto his feet and help him resume his journey.

What can we do when we find ourselves in a situation that seems to have no way out? Bartimaeus teaches us to appeal to the resources we have within us and which form a part of us. He is a beggar, he knows how to ask, indeed, he can shout! If you truly want something, you do everything in order to be able to reach it, even when others reproach you, humiliate you and tell you to let it be. If you really desire it, you keep on shouting!

The cry of Bartimaeus, in the Gospel of Mark – “Jesus, son of David, have pity on me!” (v. 47) – has become a very well-known prayer in the Eastern tradition, which we too can use: “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have pity on me, a sinner”.

Bartimaeus is blind, but paradoxically he sees better than the others, and he recognizes who Jesus is! Before his cry, Jesus stops and has him called (cf. 49), because there is no cry that God does not hear, even when we are not aware we are addressing him (cf. Ex 2:23). It seems strange that, in front of a blind man, Jesus does not go immediately to him; but, if we think about it, it is the way to reactivate Bartimaeus' life: He spurs him to get up again, He trusts in his ability to walk. That man can get up on his feet again, he can rise from the throes of death. But in order to do this, he must perform a very meaningful gesture: he must throw away his cloak (cf. v. 50)!

For a beggar, the cloak is everything: it is his safety, it is his house, it is the defence that protects him. Even the law protected the beggar's cloak, and imposed that it be returned in the evening if taken as a pledge (cf. Ex 22:25). And yet, many times, it is precisely our apparent securities that stand in our way – what we have put on to defend ourselves and which instead prevent us from walking. To go to Jesus and let himself be healed, Bartimaeus must show himself to Him in all his vulnerability. This is the fundamental step in any journey of healing.

Even the question that Jesus asks him seems strange: “What do you want me to do for you?” (v.51). But, in reality, it is not given that we want to be healed from our ailments; at times we prefer to stay still so as

not to take responsibility. Bartimaeus' reply is profound: he uses the verb *anablepein*, which can mean "to see again", but which we can also translate as "to look up". Indeed, Bartimaeus does not want only to see again; he wants to regain his dignity! To look up, we must raise our heads. At times people are stuck because life has humiliated them, and they just want to find their worth again.

What saves Bartimaeus, and each one of us, is faith. Jesus heals us so that we can become free. He does not invite Bartimaeus to follow him, but tells him to go, to set out on his way (cf. v.52). However, Mark concludes the story by saying that Bartimaeus began to follow Jesus: he freely chose to follow him, He who is the Way!

Dear brothers and sisters, let us trustfully bring our ailments before Jesus, and also those of our loved ones; let us bring the pain of those who feel lost and without a way out. Let us cry out for them too, and we will be certain that the Lord will hear us and stop.

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[1] This is the interpretation also given by Augustine in *The Harmony of the Gospels*, 2, 65, 125: PL 34, 1138.

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## APPEAL

I would like to assure my prayers for the victims of the tragedy that took place in the school in Graz. I am close to the families, teachers, and schoolmates. May the Lord receive these children of his in his peace.

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Greeting:

I extend a warm welcome to the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today's Audience, especially those coming from England, Scotland, Belgium, Cameroon, Zimbabwe, China, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, Canada, United States of America. As we prepare to celebrate the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity this coming Sunday, I invite you to make of your hearts a welcoming dwelling for the Father,

Son and Holy Spirit. God bless you all!

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**37. CATECHESIS OF THE HOLY FATHER**  
**Saint Peter's Basilica**  
**Saturday, 14 June 2025**

To hope is to connect. Irenaeus of Lyon

In the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Peace be with you!

Dear brothers and sisters,

This morning we will resume the special Jubilee audiences that Pope Francis had begun in the month of January, proposing each time a particular aspect of the theological virtue of hope and a spiritual figure who bore witness to it. Let us therefore continue the journey we started, as pilgrims of hope!

We are brought together by the hope transmitted by the Apostles ever since the beginning. The Apostles saw in Jesus the earth bound to heaven: with their eyes, ears and hands they welcomed the Word of life. The Jubilee is an open door to this mystery. The Jubilee year connects God's world more radically to our own. It invites us to take seriously what we pray every day: "On earth as it is in heaven". This is our hope. Here is the aspect we would like to explore today: to hope is to connect.

One of the greatest Christian theologians, Bishop Irenaeus of Lyon, will help us to understand how beautiful and relevant this hope is. Irenaeus was born in Asia Minor and was formed among those who had known the Apostles personally. He then came to Europe, because a community of Christians from his own land had already formed there. How good it is for us to remember this here, in Rome, in Europe! The Gospel was brought to this continent from outside. And even today, migrant communities are a presence that revives the faith in the countries that welcome them. The Gospel comes from outside. Irenaeus connects East and West. This is already a sign of hope, for it reminds us how peoples continue to enrich one another.

Irenaeus, however, had an even greater treasure to give to us. The doc-

trinal divisions he encountered within the Christian community, the internal conflicts and external persecutions, did not discourage him. On the contrary, in a fragmented world he learned how to think better, bringing his attention ever more deeply to Jesus. He became a cantor of his person, indeed of his flesh. Indeed, he recognized that in him, what seems to conflict is reconciled in unity. Jesus is not a wall that separates, but a door that unites us. We have to remain in him and distinguish reality from ideologies.

Dear brothers and sisters, today too ideas can run wild and words can kill. Instead, the flesh is what we are all made of; it is what links us to the earth and to other creatures. The flesh of Jesus has to be welcomed and contemplated in every brother and sister, in every creature. Let us listen to the cry of the flesh, let us hear ourselves called by name by the suffering of others. The commandment we received from the beginning is mutual love. It is inscribed in our flesh, before any other law.

Irenaeus, teacher of unity, teaches us not to oppose, but to connect. There is intelligence not where there is separation, but where there is connection. To distinguish is useful, but to divide, never. Jesus is the eternal life in our midst: he brings opposites together and makes communion possible.

We are pilgrims of hope, because among people, populations and creatures, we need someone who decides to move towards communion. Others will follow. Like Irenaeus in Lyon in the second century, so in each of our cities let us return to building bridges where today there are walls. Let us open doors, connect worlds, and there will be hope.

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Special Greetings:

I offer a warm greeting to all of you who are taking part in the Jubilee of Sport and in this international gathering on “The Momentum of Hope,” sponsored by the Dicastery for Culture and Education. The time you spend together in these days will offer you a valuable opportunity to think about the relationship between athletic activity and the virtue of hope. When we think of it, sports are animated by hope, in the sense that they involve striving towards a goal, constantly trying to improve our performance and learning to work with others as a team. At the same time, our deepest hopes challenge us to make the world of sports

an arena where authentically human and Christian values can be exercised and communicated to others for the building of a better world.

In the spirit of this Jubilee, then, I encourage you, and also the participants in the International Motorbike Rally, each in your own way, to be “missionaries of hope,” working to bring about a culture of ever greater solidarity, acceptance and fraternity. To all of you I cordially impart my Blessing.

I extend a warm welcome to the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today’s Audience, especially those coming from Ireland, Vietnam and the United States of America. In praying that you may experience an increase in the virtue of hope during this Jubilee Year, I invoke upon all of you, and upon your families, the joy and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ. God bless you!

**38. CATECHESIS OF THE HOLY FATHER**  
**Saint Peter’s Basilica**  
**Saturday, 14 June 2025**

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**39. GENERAL AUDIENCE**  
**Saint Peter’s Square**  
**Wednesday, 18 June 2025**

Dear brothers and sisters,

Let us continue to contemplate Jesus who heals. In a particular way, I would like to invite you to think about the situations in which we feel “blocked” and stuck in a dead end. At times, in fact, it seems to be pointless to continue to hope; we become resigned and no longer have the desire to fight. This situation is described in the Gospels with the image of paralysis. This is why today I would like to dwell on the healing of a paralytic, narrated in the fifth chapter of the Gospel of Saint John (5:1-9).

Jesus goes to Jerusalem for a feast of the Jews. He does not immediately go to the Temple; instead, he stops at a door, where the sheep were probably washed before being offered as a sacrifice. Near this door there were also many sick people who, unlike the sheep, were excluded from the Temple because they were considered unclean! And so it is Jesus himself who reaches out to them in their suffering. These people hoped for a miracle that might change their fate; indeed, next to the door there was a pool, whose waters were considered thaumaturgical, that is, capable of healing: at certain moments the water would stir and, according to the belief of the time, whoever immersed themselves first would be healed.

In this way a sort of “war among the poor” came to be created: we can imagine the sorry scene of these sick people who wearily dragged themselves to enter the pool. That pool was called Betzathà, which means “house of mercy”: it could be an image of the Church, where the sick and the poor gather and where the Lord comes to heal and give hope.

Jesus specifically addresses a man who has been paralyzed for some thirty-eight years. By now he is resigned, because he never manages to immerse himself in the pool when the water stirs (cf. v. 7). In effect, what paralyzes us, very often, is disappointment. We feel discouraged and risk falling into apathy.

Jesus asks the paralytic a question that may seem superfluous: “Do you want to be well?” (v. 6). Instead, it is a necessary question, because when one is stuck for so many years, even the will to heal may fade. Sometimes we prefer to remain in the condition of sickness, forcing others to take care of us. It is sometimes also an excuse for not deciding what to do with our lives. Jesus instead takes this man back to his truest and deepest desire.

Indeed, this man replies in a more articulate way to Jesus’ question, revealing his true vision of life. He says first of all that he has no-one to immerse him in the pool: so he is not to blame, but the others who do not take care of him. This attitude becomes the pretext for avoiding responsibility. But is it really true that he had no-one to help him? Here is Saint Augustine’s enlightening answer: “Truly he had need of a ‘man’ to his healing, but that ‘man’ one who is also God. ... He came, then, the Man who was needed: why should the healing be delayed?”. [1]

The paralytic then adds that when he tries to immerse himself in the pool, there is always someone who arrives before him. This man is expressing a fatalistic view of life. We think that things happen to us because we are not fortunate, because destiny is against us. This man is discouraged. He feels defeated in the struggle of life.

Instead, Jesus helps him to discover that his life is also in his hands. He invites him to get up, to raise himself up from his chronic situation, and to take his stretcher (cf. v. 8). That mat is not to be left or thrown away: it represents his past of sickness, his history. Until that moment, the past had blocked him; it had forced him to lie like a dead man. Now it is he who can take that mat and carry it wherever he wishes: he can decide what to make of his history! It is a matter of walking, taking responsibility for choosing what road to take. And this is thanks to Jesus!

Dear brothers and sisters, let us ask the Lord for the gift of understanding where our life is stuck. Let us try to give voice to our desire to be healed. And let us pray for all those who feel paralyzed, who do not see a way out. Let us ask to return to dwell in the Heart of Christ, which is the true house of mercy!

Dear brothers and sisters,

The Church is brokenhearted at the cry of pain rising from places devastated by war, especially Ukraine, Iran, Israel and Gaza. We must never get used to war! Indeed, the temptation to have recourse to powerful and sophisticated weapons needs to be rejected. Today, when “every kind of weapon produced by modern science is used in war, the savagery of war threatens to lead the combatants to barbarities far surpassing those of former ages” (SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, 79). For this reason, in the name of human dignity and international law, I reiterate to those in positions of responsibility the frequent warning of Pope Francis: War is always a defeat! And that of Pope Pius XII: “Nothing is lost with peace. Everything may be lost with war.”

Greeting:

I greet all the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today’s Audience, particularly the groups from England, Northern Ireland, Norway, Cameroon, Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, Indonesia, the Philip-

pires, Singapore, Vietnam, Canada and the United States of America. My special greeting goes to the members of the “HOPE80” international delegation at the start of the “Flame of Hope” pilgrimage as they seek to promote reconciliation and peace in this year marking the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War.

May the light of divine love and fraternity always burn brightly in the hearts of the men and women of our one human family.

Upon all of you, and upon your families, I invoke the Lord’s gifts of wisdom, strength and joy. God bless you.

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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In our continuing catechesis on the Jubilee theme of “Jesus Christ our Hope”, we now consider Jesus’ miraculous cure of the paralytic at the pool of Bethesda. Many physically disabled people came to bathe there in hope of a cure, yet Jesus chose that man, who had been paralyzed for thirty-eight years and was unable to enter the pool by himself. Jesus’ question to him – “Do you want to be healed?” – was penetrating. It challenged the paralytic’s sense of helplessness and resignation, and invited him to hope that his life could be changed. Jesus tells him to stand, take up his mat and walk. The mat was in fact the symbol of the man’s past paralysis, physical and spiritual, which he can now accept and leave behind as he begins his new life. In this Jubilee of hope, may we remember in our prayers all those who suffer and feel tempted to discouragement. Whatever problems or setbacks we may face in life, let us turn to Jesus, acknowledge our desire for healing, and accept his promise of freedom and newness of life.

**40. GENERAL AUDIENCE**  
**Saint Peter’s Square**  
**Wednesday, 25 June 2025**

CCycle of Catechesis – Jubilee 2025. Jesus Christ our Hope. II. The life of Jesus. The Healings. 11. The bleeding woman and Jairus’ daughter. “Do not be afraid; just have faith!” (Mk 5:36)

Dear brothers and sisters,

Today we will again consider the healings of Jesus as a sign of hope. In Him, there is a strength that we too can experience when we enter into a relationship with His Person.

A very widespread ailment of our time is the fatigue of living: reality seems to us to be too complex, burdensome, difficult to face. And so we switch off, we fall asleep, in the delusion that, upon waking, things will be different. But reality has to be faced, and together with Jesus, we can do it well. At times we feel blocked by the judgment of those who claim to put labels on others.

It seems to me that these situations can find an answer in a passage from the Gospel of Mark, where two stories intertwine: that of the twelve-year-old girl, who is sick in bed and is dying; and that of a woman who has been bleeding for precisely twelve years, and seeks out Jesus in order to be healed (cf. Mk 5:21-43).

Between these two female figures, the Evangelist places the character of the girl's father: he does not stay at home complaining about his daughter's illness, but rather he goes out and asks for help. Although he is an official of the synagogue, he makes no demands on account of his social position. When it is necessary to wait, he does not lose his patience, and he waits. And when they come to tell him that his daughter is dead and it is pointless to disturb the Master, he continues to have faith and to hope.

The conversation between this father and Jesus is interrupted by the bleeding woman, who manages to come close to Jesus and to touch his cloak (v. 27). This woman, with great courage, made the decision that would change her life: everyone continued to tell her to keep her distance, to keep out of view. They had condemned her to stay hidden and isolated. At times, we too can be victims of the judgment of others, who presume to put a robe on us that is not our own. And then we suffer, and cannot come out of it.

That woman embarks on the path of salvation when the faith that Jesus can heal her germinates: so, she finds the strength to come out and go in search of him. She wants to reach out and at least touch his garment.

Around Jesus there is a large crowd, and therefore many people were touching him, and yet nothing happens to them. Instead, when this woman touches Jesus, she is healed. Where does the difference lie? In his

commentary on this point of the text, Saint Augustine says – in Jesus' name – “The crowd jostles, faith touches” (Sermon 243, 2, 2). It is thus: every time we perform an act of faith addressed to Jesus, contact is established with Him, and immediately his grace comes out from Him. At times we are unaware of it, but in a secret and real way, grace reaches us and gradually transforms our life from within.

Perhaps today too, many people approach Jesus in a superficial way, without truly believing in his power. We walk the surfaces of our churches, but maybe our heart is elsewhere! This woman, silent and anonymous, conquers her fears, touches the heart of Jesus with her hands, considered unclean because of her illness. And she is immediately healed. Jesus says to her: “Daughter, your faith has saved you. Go in peace” (Mk 5:34).

In the meantime, the father receives the news that his daughter is dead. Jesus says to him: “Do not be afraid; just have faith” (v. 36). He then goes to the house and, seeing that everyone is weeping and wailing, says: “The child is not dead but asleep” (v. 39). He enters the chamber where the child is lying, takes her hand, and says to her: “Talità kum”, “Little girl, arise!”. The girl stands up and starts to walk (cf. vv. 41-42). Jesus' act shows us that not only does He heal from every illness, but He also awakens from death. For God, who is eternal Life, death of the body is like sleep. True death is that of the soul: of this we must be afraid!

One last detail: Jesus, after reviving the child, tells the parents to give her something to eat (cf. v. 43). Here is another very concrete sign of Jesus' closeness to our humanity. But we can also understand it in a deeper sense, and ask ourselves: when our children are in crisis and need spiritual nourishment, do we know how to give it to them? And how can we, if we ourselves are not nourished by the Gospel?

Dear brothers and sisters, in life there are moments of disappointment and discouragement, and there is also the experience of death. Let us learn from that woman, from that father: let us go to Jesus: He can heal us, He can revive us. Jesus is our hope!

Last Sunday, a heinous terrorist attack was carried out against the Greek Orthodox community in the Church of Mar Elias in Damascus. We entrust the victims to God's mercy and we offer our prayers for the wounded and their families. I say to the Christians of the Middle East: I

am close to you! The whole Church is close to you!

This tragic event recalls the profound fragility that Syria still faces after years of conflict and instability. It is therefore essential that the international community not ignore this country, but continue to offer support through gestures of solidarity and a renewed commitment to peace and reconciliation.

We continue to follow carefully and with hope the developments in Iran, Israel and Palestine. The words of the prophet Isaiah resound with urgent relevance: "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Is 2:4). May this voice, which comes from the Most High, be heard! May the wounds caused by the bloody actions of recent days be healed. Let us reject arrogance and revenge, and instead resolutely choose the path of dialogue, diplomacy and peace.

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Special greetings:

I am happy to welcome this morning the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today's Audience, especially those coming from Malta, Eswatini, Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, Australia, China, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, South Korea and the United States of America. I offer special greetings to the members of Citizens UK catholic movement. As the month of June draws to a close, we ask the Sacred Heart of Jesus to increase our faith as we turn to him in trust. God bless you all!

**41. GENERAL AUDIENCE**  
**Saint Peter's Square**  
**Wednesday, 30 July 2025**

Cycle of Catechesis - Jubilee 2025. Jesus Christ our hope. II. The life of Jesus. The healings. 12. The healing of a deaf man with a speech impediment. They were exceedingly astonished and they said, "He has done all things well; he even makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak." (Mk 7:37)

Dear brothers and sisters,

With this catechesis, we conclude our journey through the public life of Jesus, marked by encounters, parables, and healings.

This time in which we live also needs healing. Our world is marked by a climate of violence and hatred that demeans human dignity. We live in a society that is becoming ill due to a kind of “bulimia” of social media connections: we are hyperconnected, bombarded by images, sometimes false or distorted. We are overwhelmed by countless messages that stir within us a storm of contradictory emotions.

In this scenario, it is possible that within us arises the desire to turn everything off. We may come to prefer not to feel anything anymore. Even our words risk being misunderstood, and we may be tempted to close ourselves in silence, into a lack of communication where, despite our closeness, we are no longer able to say to one another the most simple and profound things.

In this regard, today I would like to reflect on a passage from the Gospel of Mark that presents us with a man who cannot speak or hear (cf. Mk 7:31–37). Just as it can sometimes happen to us, perhaps this man chose not to speak anymore because he did not feel understood; he chose to shut off every voice because he had been disappointed and wounded by what he had heard. In fact, it is not he who goes to Jesus to be healed, but others bring him. One may think that the people who take him to the Master are concerned about his isolation. The Christian community, however, has also seen in these people an image of the Church, which accompanies each person to Jesus so that they may listen to His word. The episode takes place in pagan territory, so we are in a context where other voices tend to drown out God’s voice.

Jesus’ behavior may initially seem strange, because He takes this person aside (v. 33a). In this way, He seems to emphasize his isolation, but on closer look, it helps us to understand what lies behind the silence and closure of this man, as if Jesus had perceived his need for intimacy and closeness.

Before anything else, Jesus offers him silent closeness, through gestures that speak of a profound encounter: He touches this man’s ears and tongue (cf. v. 33b). Jesus does not use many words; He says only what is necessary in that moment: “Be opened!” (v. 34). Mark uses the word in Aramaic—Eph’phatha—as though to let us hear, almost “in person” its sound and breath. This simple and beautiful word contains the invitation that Jesus addresses to this man who had stopped listening and speaking. It is as if Jesus were saying to him: “Be opened to this world

that frightens you! Be opened to the relationships that have disappointed you! Be opened to the life you have given up facing!". Closing in on oneself, in fact, is never a solution.

After the encounter with Jesus, that person not only begins to speak again, but he does so "plainly" (v. 35). This adverb, inserted by the Evangelist, seems to suggest something deeper about the reasons for his silence. Perhaps this man had stopped speaking because he felt he was saying things the wrong way, perhaps he felt inadequate. All of us experience what it means to be misunderstood, to feel that we are not truly heard. All of us need to ask the Lord to heal our way of communicating, not only so that we may be more effective, but also so that we may avoid wounding others with our words.

To begin speaking correctly again is the start of a journey, it is not yet the destination. In fact, Jesus forbids that man from talking about what has happened to him (cf. v. 36). To truly know Jesus, one must complete a journey; one must remain with Him and also pass through His Passion. When we have seen Him humiliated and suffering, when we have experienced the saving power of His Cross, then we can say that we have truly come to know Him. There are no shortcuts to becoming disciples of Jesus.

Dear brothers and sisters, let us ask the Lord that we may learn to communicate with honesty and prudence. Let us pray for all those who have been wounded by the words of others. Let us pray for the Church, that she may never fail in her mission to lead people to Jesus, so that they may hear His Word, be healed by it, and in turn become bearers of His message of salvation.

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## APPEAL

I renew my deep sorrow for the brutal terrorist attack that occurred during the night between 26 and 27 July in Komanda, in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where over 40 Christians were killed in a church during a prayer vigil, and in their own homes. As I entrust the victims to God's loving Mercy, I pray for the wounded and for Christians around the world who continue to suffer violence and persecution. I urge those with local and international responsibility, to work together in order to prevent such tragedies.

On 1 August, the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Helsinki Final Act will be commemorated. Motivated by the desire to ensure security during the Cold War, 35 countries launched a new geopolitical chapter, fostering a rapprochement between East and West. This event also marked renewed interest in human rights, with special emphasis on religious freedom—regarded as one of the cornerstones of the then emerging architecture of cooperation “from Vancouver to Vladivostok.” The Holy See’s active participation in the Helsinki Conference—represented by Archbishop Agostino Casaroli—helped to promote political and moral commitment to peace. Today, more than ever, it is essential to safeguard the spirit of Helsinki: to persevere in dialogue, strengthen cooperation, and make diplomacy the preferred path to prevent and resolve conflicts.

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### Greeting

I extend a warm welcome to the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors taking part in today’s Audience, especially those coming from England, Scotland, Ireland, Sweden, South Africa, New Zealand, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Malaysia, South Korea, the United Arab Emirates, Canada, and the United States of America. In greeting with particular affection all the young people present today who are participating in the Jubilee of Youth, I encourage you to open your hearts to God’s healing love, so that you can become even brighter beacons of hope in the world. God bless you all!

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### Summary of the Holy Father’s words:

Dear Brothers and Sisters, In our continuing catechesis on the Jubilee theme of “Jesus Christ our Hope,” today we conclude our reflections on Jesus’ public ministry with the healing of a deaf man who had a speech impediment. As we heard in the Gospel reading, in a gesture of closeness, Jesus took the man aside and healed him with his words and his touch. Today, many people isolate themselves in their desperation and seem to have lost their ability to communicate, perhaps because they have often felt wounded and misunderstood in their interactions with others. We are in need of moments of intimacy with Jesus so that we

can hear him say, “Ephphatha,” meaning, “Be opened.” He enables us to look beyond our own troubles and to put our listening and communication skills at the service of others. Just as the deaf man’s friends brought him to Jesus, so we too are called to become witnesses of Jesus’ healing power and to bring others to him, so that they can listen to his words, experience his touch, be filled with hope, and be healed.

**42. AUDIENCE WITH THE MEMBERS OF THE COLLEGE  
OF CARDINALS  
ADDRESS OF POPE LEO XIV  
Saturday, May 10, 2025**

Thank you very much, Your Eminence! Before we take our seats, let us begin with a prayer, asking the Lord to continue accompanying this College and, above all, the whole Church with this spirit—also with enthusiasm, but with profound faith. Let us pray together, in Latin:

Pater noster... Ave Maria...

In the first part of this meeting, I would like to share with you a brief reflection. Then there will be a second part, something like the experience that many of you requested, a kind of sharing with the College of Cardinals, in order to hear what counsels, suggestions, proposals—very concrete things—which were already touched upon in the days preceding the Conclave.

Brother Cardinals!

I greet and thank you all for this meeting and for the days that preceded it, days which were sorrowful because of the loss of Pope Francis and demanding because of the responsibility we have faced together, but at the same time rich in grace and consolation in the Spirit, according to the promise that Jesus Himself made to us (cf. Jn 14:25-27).

Dear Cardinals, you are the closest collaborators of the Pope, and this is a great comfort to me, who have accepted a burden clearly far beyond my strength, as it would be for anyone else. Your presence reminds me that the Lord, having entrusted me with this mission, does not leave me alone to carry such responsibility. I know, first of all, that I can always—always!—count on your help, on the help of the Lord, and, through His Grace and Providence, on your closeness and that of so many brothers and sisters throughout the world who believe in God, love the Church,

and support the Vicar of Christ with prayer and good works.

I thank the Dean of the College of Cardinals, Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re—who deserves an applause! At least one, if not more—whose wisdom, fruit of a long life and many years of faithful service to the Apostolic See, has greatly helped us in this time. I thank the Camerlengo of the Holy Roman Church, Cardinal Kevin Joseph Farrell—I believe he is here present—for the precious and arduous role he fulfilled during the period of the Sede Vacante and the convocation of the Conclave. I also extend my thoughts to the brother Cardinals who, for reasons of health, could not be present, and with you, I unite myself to them in communion of affection and prayer.

In this moment, both sorrowful and joyful, providentially enveloped in the light of Easter, I would like us to look together at the passing of the beloved Pope Francis and at the Conclave as a paschal event, a stage of the long exodus through which the Lord continues to lead us toward the fullness of life. And, in this perspective, we entrust to the “Father of mercies and God of all consolation” (2 Cor 1:3) the soul of the late Pontiff and also the future of the Church.

The Pope, from Saint Peter to me, his unworthy Successor, is a humble servant of God and of the brethren, nothing more. This has been well demonstrated by the examples of so many of my Predecessors, the last of whom was Pope Francis himself, with his style of total dedication to service and essential simplicity in life, of abandonment to God during the time of mission, and of serene trust at the moment of departure to the House of the Father. Let us welcome this precious inheritance and take up the journey again, inspired by the same hope that comes from faith.

It is the Risen One, present in our midst, who protects and guides the Church and who continues to rekindle her in hope, through the love “poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us” (Rom 5:5). It is up to each of us to become docile listeners to His voice and faithful ministers of His designs of salvation, remembering that God delights to speak, not so much in the roar of thunder or the earthquake, but in the “murmur of a gentle breeze” (1 Kgs 19:12), or, as some translate, in a “still small voice.” This is the encounter that matters most, the one that must not be missed, and for which we must educate and accompany the whole holy People of God entrusted to us.

In recent days, we have been able to see the beauty and feel the strength of this immense community, which with such affection and devotion greeted and wept for its Pastor, accompanying him with faith and prayer at the moment of his definitive encounter with the Lord. We saw the true greatness of the Church, which lives in the diversity of her members united to the one Head, who is Christ, “Shepherd and Guardian” (1 Pet 2:25) of our souls. She is the womb in which we too were begotten and, at the same time, the flock (cf. Jn 21:15-17), the field (cf. Mk 4:1-20) given to us to care for and cultivate, to nourish with the Sacraments of salvation and to make fruitful with the seed of the Word, so that, firm in concord and zealous in mission, she may walk, as once the Israelites in the desert, under the shadow of the cloud and the light of God’s flame (cf. Ex 13:21).

In this regard, I would like us today to renew together our full adherence to this path which the universal Church has been traveling for decades in the wake of the Second Vatican Council. Pope Francis recalled and masterfully updated its contents in the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, from which I would like to highlight some fundamental points: the return to the primacy of Christ in proclamation (cf. n. 11); the missionary conversion of the entire Christian community (cf. n. 9); growth in collegiality and synodality (cf. n. 33); attention to the *sensus fidei* (cf. nn. 119-120), especially in its most authentic and inclusive forms, such as popular piety (cf. n. 123); loving care for the marginalized and excluded (cf. n. 53); courageous and confident dialogue with the contemporary world in its various components and realities (cf. n. 84; Vatican II, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, 1-2).

These are Gospel principles that have always animated and inspired the life and action of the Family of God, values through which the merciful face of the Father has been revealed and continues to be revealed in the Son made man, the ultimate hope of all who sincerely seek truth, justice, peace, and fraternity (cf. Benedict XVI, Encyclical *Spe Salvi*, 2; Francis, Bull *Spe Non Confundit*, 3).

Precisely because I feel called to follow along this line, I thought of adopting the name Leo XIV. In truth, there are various reasons, but the main one is that Pope Leo XIII, with the historic Encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, addressed the social question in the context of the first great industrial revolution; and today, the Church offers to all the richness of her social teaching to respond to another industrial revolution and to the developments of artificial intelligence, which bring new challenges to the defense of human dignity, of justice, and of labor.

Dear brothers, I would like to conclude this first part of our meeting by making my own—and also proposing to you—the desire that Saint Paul VI, in 1963, expressed at the beginning of his Petrine ministry: “May it spread throughout the whole world, like a great flame of faith and love that enkindles all men of good will, enlightens the paths of mutual cooperation, and draws down upon humanity, now and always, the abundance of divine favor, the very power of God, without whose help nothing is valid, nothing is holy” (Message to the Human Family *Qui fausto die*, June 22, 1963).

May these also be our sentiments, to be translated into prayer and commitment, with the help of the Lord. Thank you!

**43. ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV  
TO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MEDIA  
Audience Hall  
Monday, 12 May 2025**

Good morning and thank you for this wonderful reception! They say when they clap at the beginning it does not matter much, if you are still awake at the end and you still want to applaud...thank you very much!

Brothers and sisters,

I welcome you, representatives of the media from around the world. Thank you for the work you have done and continue to do in these days, which is truly a time of grace for the Church.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus proclaimed: “Blessed are the peacemakers” (Mt 5:9). This is a Beatitude that challenges all of us, but it is particularly relevant to you, calling each one of you to strive for a different kind of communication, one that does not seek consensus at all costs, does not use aggressive words, does not follow the culture of competition and never separates the search for truth from the love with which we must humbly seek it. Peace begins with each one of us: in the way we look at others, listen to others and speak about others. In this sense, the way we communicate is of fundamental importance: we must say “no” to the war of words and images, we must reject the paradigm of war.

Let me, therefore, reiterate today the Church's solidarity with journalists who are imprisoned for seeking to report the truth, and with these words I also ask for the release of these imprisoned journalists. The Church recognises in these witnesses – I am thinking of those who report on war even at the cost of their lives – the courage of those who defend dignity, justice and the right of people to be informed, because only informed individuals can make free choices. The suffering of these imprisoned journalists challenges the conscience of nations and the international community, calling on all of us to safeguard the precious gift of free speech and of the press.

Thank you, dear friends, for your service to the truth. You have been in Rome these past few weeks to report on the Church, its diversity and, at the same time, its unity. You were present during the liturgies of Holy Week and then reported on the sorrow felt over the death of Pope Francis, which nevertheless took place in the light of Easter. That same Easter faith drew us into the spirit of the Conclave, during which you worked long and tiring days. Yet, even on this occasion, you managed to recount the beauty of Christ's love that unites and makes us one people, guided by the Good Shepherd.

We are living in times that are both difficult to navigate and to recount. They present a challenge for all of us but it is one that we should not run away from. On the contrary, they demand that each one of us, in our different roles and services, never give in to mediocrity. The Church must face the challenges posed by the times. In the same way, communication and journalism do not exist outside of time and history. Saint Augustine reminds of this when he said, "Let us live well and the times will be good. We are the times" (Discourse 80.8).

Thank you, therefore, for what you have done to move beyond stereotypes and clichés through which we often interpret Christian life and the life of the Church itself. Thank you because you have captured the essence of who we are and conveyed it to the whole world through every form of media possible.

Today, one of the most important challenges is to promote communication that can bring us out of the "Tower of Babel" in which we sometimes find ourselves, out of the confusion of loveless languages that are often ideological or partisan. Therefore, your service, with the words you use and the style you adopt, is crucial. As you know, communication is not only the transmission of information, but it is also the creation of a

culture, of human and digital environments that become spaces for dialogue and discussion. In looking at how technology is developing, this mission becomes ever more necessary. I am thinking in particular of artificial intelligence, with its immense potential, which nevertheless requires responsibility and discernment in order to ensure that it can be used for the good of all, so that it can benefit all of humanity. This responsibility concerns everyone in proportion to his or her age and role in society.

Dear friends, we will get to know each other better over time. We have experienced – we can say together – truly special days. We have shared them through every form of media: TV, radio, internet, and social media. I sincerely hope that each of us can say that these days unveiled a little bit of the mystery of our humanity and left us with a desire for love and peace. For this reason, I repeat to you today the invitation made by Pope Francis in his message for this year’s World Day of Social Communications: let us disarm communication of all prejudice and resentment, fanaticism and even hatred; let us free it from aggression. We do not need loud, forceful communication, but rather communication that is capable of listening and of gathering the voices of the weak who have no voice. Let us disarm words and we will help to disarm the world. Disarmed and disarming communication allows us to share a different view of the world and to act in a manner consistent with our human dignity.

You are at the forefront of reporting on conflicts and aspirations for peace, on situations of injustice and poverty, and on the silent work of so many people striving to create a better world. For this reason, I ask you to choose consciously and courageously the path of communication in favour of peace.

Thank you all and may God bless you!

**44. ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV  
TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE JUBILEE OF ORIENTAL CHURCHES  
Audience Hall  
Wednesday, 14 May 2025**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Peace be with you.

Your Beatitudes, Your Eminence, Your Excellencies,  
Dear priests, consecrated men and women,  
Dear brothers and sisters,

Christ is risen. He is truly risen! I greet you in these words that Eastern Christians in many lands never tire of repeating during the Easter season, as they profess the very heart of our faith and hope. It is very moving for me to see you here during the Jubilee of Hope, a hope unshakably grounded in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Welcome to Rome! I am happy to be with you and to devote one of the first audiences of my pontificate to the Eastern faithful.

You are precious in God's eyes. Looking at you, I think of the diversity of your origins, your glorious history and the bitter sufferings that many of your communities have endured or continue to endure. I would like to reaffirm the conviction of Pope Francis that the Eastern Churches are to be "cherished and esteemed for the unique spiritual and sapiential traditions that they preserve, and for all that they have to say to us about the Christian life, synodality, and the liturgy. We think of early Fathers, the Councils, and monasticism... inestimable treasures for the Church (Address to Participants in the Meeting of Aid Agencies for the Oriental Churches [ROACO], 27 June 2024).

I would also like to mention Pope Leo XIII, the first Pope to devote a specific document to the dignity of your Churches, inspired above all by the fact that, in his words, "the work of human redemption began in the East" (cf. Apostolic Letter *Orientalium Dignitas*, 30 November 1894). Truly, you have "a unique and privileged role as the original setting where the Church was born" (SAINT JOHN PAUL II, *Orientalium Lumen*, 5). It is significant that several of your liturgies – which you are now solemnly celebrating in Rome in accordance with your various traditions – continue to use the language of the Lord Jesus. Indeed, Pope Leo XIII made a heartfelt appeal that the "legitimate variety of Eastern liturgy and discipline... may redound to the great honor and benefit of the Church" (*Orientalium Dignitas*). His desire remains ever timely. In our own day too, many of our Eastern brothers and sisters, including some of you, have been forced to flee their homelands because of war and persecution, instability and poverty, and risk losing not only their native lands, but also, when they reach the West, their religious identity. As a result, with the passing of generations, the priceless heritage of the Eastern Churches is being lost.

Over a century ago, Leo XIII pointed out that “preserving the Eastern rites is more important than is generally realized”. He went so far as to decree that “any Latin-Rite missionary, whether a member of the secular or regular clergy, who by advice or support draws any Eastern-Rite Catholic to the Latin Rite” ought to be “dismissed and removed from his office” (ibid). We willingly reiterate this appeal to preserve and promote the Christian East, especially in the diaspora. In addition to establishing Eastern circumscriptions wherever possible and opportune, there is a need to promote greater awareness among Latin Christians. In this regard, I ask the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches – which I thank for its work – to help me to define principles, norms, and guidelines whereby Latin Bishops can concretely support Eastern Catholics in the diaspora in their efforts to preserve their living traditions and thus, by their distinctive witness, to enrich the communities in which they live.

The Church needs you. The contribution that the Christian East can offer us today is immense! We have great need to recover the sense of mystery that remains alive in your liturgies, liturgies that engage the human person in his or her entirety, that sing of the beauty of salvation and evoke a sense of wonder at how God’s majesty embraces our human frailty! It is likewise important to rediscover, especially in the Christian West, a sense of the primacy of God, the importance of mystagogy and the values so typical of Eastern spirituality: constant intercession, penance, fasting, and weeping for one’s own sins and for those of all humanity (penthos)! It is vital, then, that you preserve your traditions without attenuating them, for the sake perhaps of practicality or convenience, lest they be corrupted by the mentality of consumerism and utilitarianism.

Your traditions of spirituality, ancient yet ever new, are medicinal. In them, the drama of human misery is combined with wonder at God’s mercy, so that our sinfulness does not lead to despair, but opens us to accepting the gracious gift of becoming creatures who are healed, divinized and raised to the heights of heaven. For this, we ought to give endless praise and thanks to the Lord. Together, we can pray with Saint Ephrem the Syrian and say to the Lord Jesus: “Glory to you, who laid your cross as a bridge over death... Glory to you who clothed yourself in the body of mortal man, and made it the source of life for all mortals” (Homily on our Lord, 9). We must ask, then, for the grace to see the certainty of Easter in every trial of life and not to lose heart, remembering, as another great Eastern Father wrote, that “the greatest sin is not to believe in the power of the Resurrection” (SAINT ISAAC OF NINEVEH,

Sermones ascetici, I, 5).

Who, better than you, can sing a song of hope even amid the abyss of violence? Who, better than you, who have experienced the horrors of war so closely that Pope Francis referred to you as “martyr Churches” (Address to ROACO, *ibid.*)? From the Holy Land to Ukraine, from Lebanon to Syria, from the Middle East to Tigray and the Caucasus, how much violence do we see! Rising up from this horror, from the slaughter of so many young people, which ought to provoke outrage because lives are being sacrificed in the name of military conquest, there resounds an appeal: the appeal not so much of the Pope, but of Christ himself, who repeats: “Peace be with you!” (Jn 20:19, 21, 26). And he adds: “Peace I leave you; my peace I give to you. I do not give it to you as the world gives it” (Jn 14:27). Christ’s peace is not the sepulchral silence that reigns after conflict; it is not the fruit of oppression, but rather a gift that is meant for all, a gift that brings new life. Let us pray for this peace, which is reconciliation, forgiveness, and the courage to turn the page and start anew.

For my part, I will make every effort so that this peace may prevail. The Holy See is always ready to help bring enemies together, face to face, to talk to one another, so that peoples everywhere may once more find hope and recover the dignity they deserve, the dignity of peace. The peoples of our world desire peace, and to their leaders I appeal with all my heart: Let us meet, let us talk, let us negotiate! War is never inevitable. Weapons can and must be silenced, for they do not resolve problems but only increase them. Those who make history are the peacemakers, not those who sow seeds of suffering. Our neighbours are not first our enemies, but our fellow human beings; not criminals to be hated, but other men and women with whom we can speak. Let us reject the Manichean notions so typical of that mindset of violence that divides the world into those who are good and those who are evil.

The Church will never tire of repeating: let weapons be silenced. I would like to thank God for all those who, in silence, prayer and self-sacrifice, are sowing seeds of peace. I thank God for those Christians – Eastern and Latin alike – who, above all in the Middle East, persevere and remain in their homelands, resisting the temptation to abandon them. Christians must be given the opportunity, and not just in words, to remain in their native lands with all the rights needed for a secure existence. Please, let us strive for this!

Thank you, dear brothers and sisters of the East, the lands where Jesus,

the Sun of Justice, dawned, for being “lights in our world” (cf. Mt 5:14). Continue to be outstanding for your faith, hope, and charity, and nothing else. May your Churches be exemplary, and may your Pastors promote communion with integrity, especially in the Synods of Bishops, that they may be places of fraternity and authentic co-responsibility. Ensure transparency in the administration of goods and be signs of humble and complete dedication to the holy people of God, without regard for honors, worldly power or appearance. Saint Symeon the New Theologian used an eloquent image in this regard: “Just as one who throws dust on the flame of a burning furnace extinguishes it, so the cares of this life and every kind of attachment to petty and worthless things destroy the warmth of the heart that was initially kindled” (Practical and Theological Chapters, 63). Today more than ever, the splendor of the Christian East demands freedom from all worldly attachments and from every tendency contrary to communion, in order to remain faithful in obedience and in evangelical witness.

I thank you for this, and in cordially giving you my blessing, I ask you to pray for the Church and to raise your powerful prayers of intercession for my ministry. Thank you!

**45. ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV  
TO THE BROTHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS  
Clementine Hall  
Thursday, 15 May 2025**

In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, peace be with you.

Your Eminence,  
Dear brothers and sisters, welcome!

I am very pleased to receive you, in the third centenary of the promulgation of the Bull *In apostolicae Dignitatis solio*, with which Pope Benedict XIII approved your Institute and your Regulations (26 January 1725). It also coincides with the 75th anniversary of the proclamation, by Pope Pius XII, of Saint John Baptist de La Salle as “Heavenly patron of all educators” (cf. Apostolic Letter *Quod ait*, 15 May 1950: AAS 12, 1950, 631-632).

After three centuries, it is good to see how your presence continues to

bear the freshness of a rich and vast educational entity, with which, in various parts of the world, you still dedicate yourselves to the formation of the young with enthusiasm, fidelity and a spirit of sacrifice.

Precisely in the light of this anniversary, I would like to pause and reflect with you on two aspects of your history that I consider important for all of us: attention to current events and the ministerial and missionary dimension of teaching in the community.

The beginnings of your work say a great deal about “current events”. Saint John Baptist de La Salle began by responding to the request for help from a layperson, Adriano Nyel, who was struggling to maintain his “school of the poor”. Your founder recognized in his request for help a sign of God; he accepted the challenge and set to work. Thus, beyond his own intentions and expectations, he brought to life to a new teaching system: that of the Christian Schools, free and open to everyone. Among the innovative elements he introduced in this pedagogical revolution were the teaching of classes and no longer of individual pupils; instead of Latin, the adoption of French as the language of instruction, which was accessible to all; Sunday lessons, in which even young people forced to work on weekdays were able to participate; and the involvement of families in the school curriculum, according to the principle of the “educational triangle”, which is still valid today. Thus, problems, as they arose, instead of discouraging him, stimulated him to seek creative answers and to venture onto new and often unexplored paths.

All this can but make us think, and it also raises useful questions. What, in the world of youth today, are the most urgent challenges to be faced? What values are to be promoted? What resources can be counted on?

Young people of our time, like those of every age, are a volcano of life, energy, sentiments and ideas. It can be seen from the wonderful things they are able to do, in so many fields. However, they also need help in order for this great wealth to grow in harmony, and to overcome what, albeit in a different way to the past, can still hinder their healthy development.

While, for example, in the seventeenth century the use of the Latin language was an insuperable barrier to communication for many people, today there are other obstacles to be faced. Think of the isolation caused by rampant relational models increasingly marked by superficiality, individualism and emotional instability; the spread of patterns of thought

weakened by relativism; and the prevalence of rhythms and lifestyles in which there is not enough room for listening, reflection and dialogue, at school, in the family, and sometimes among peers themselves, with consequent loneliness.

These are demanding challenges, but we too, like Saint John Baptist de La Salle, can turn them into springboards to explore ways, develop tools and adopt new languages to continue to touch the hearts of pupils, helping them and spurring them on to face every obstacle with courage in order to give the best of themselves in life, according to God's plans. In this sense, the attention you pay, in your schools, to the training of teachers and to the creation of educating communities in which the teaching effort is enriched by the contribution of all is commendable. I encourage you to continue along these paths.

But I would like to point out another aspect of the Lasallian reality that I consider important: teaching lived as ministry and mission, as consecration in the Church. Saint John Baptist de La Salle did not want there to be priests among the teachers of the Christian Schools, but only "brothers", so that all your efforts would be directed, with God's help, to the education of the pupils. He loved to say: "Your altar is the cathedra", thus promoting a reality hitherto unknown in the Church of his time: that of lay teachers and catechists, invested in the community with a genuine "ministry", in accordance with the principle of evangelizing by educating, and educating by evangelizing (cf. Francis, Address to participants in the General Chapter of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, 21 May 2022).

In this way the charism of the school, which you embrace with the fourth vow of teaching, besides being a service to society and a valuable work of charity, still appears today as one of the most beautiful and eloquent expressions of that priestly, prophetic and kingly munus we have all received in Baptism, as highlighted in the documents of the Vatican Council II. Thus, in your educational entities, religious brothers make prophetically visible, through their consecration, the baptismal ministry that spurs everyone (cf. Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, 44), each according to his or her status and duties, without differences, "as living members, to expend all their energy for the growth of the Church and its continuous sanctification" (ivi., 33).

For this reason, I hope that vocations to Lasallian religious consecration may grow, that they may be encouraged and promoted, in your schools

and outside them, and that, in synergy with all the other formative components, they may contribute to inspiring joyful and fruitful paths of holiness among the young people who attend them.

Thank you for what you do! I pray for you, and I impart to you the apostolic Blessing, which I gladly extend to all the Lasallian Family.

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**46. AUDIENCE OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV**  
**Clementine Hall**  
**Friday, 16 May 2025**

Your Eminence,  
Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Peace be with you!

I thank His Excellency Mr George Poulides, Ambassador of the Republic of Cyprus and Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, for his cordial greeting in your name, and for the tireless work that he has carried out with his characteristic energy, commitment and kindness. These qualities have earned him the esteem of all my predecessors whom he has met in these years of his mission to the Holy See, particularly the late Pope Francis.

I would also like to express my gratitude for your many messages of good wishes following my election, as well as those expressing condolence for the death of Pope Francis. Some of those messages also came from countries with which the Holy See does not have diplomatic relations, a significant sign of esteem that indicates a strengthening of mutual relations.

In our dialogue, I would like us always to preserve the sense of being a family. Indeed, the diplomatic community represents the entire family of peoples, a family that shares the joys and sorrows of life and the human and spiritual values that give it meaning and direction. Papal diplomacy is an expression of the very catholicity of the Church. In its diplomatic activity, the Holy See is inspired by a pastoral outreach that leads it not to seek privileges but to strengthen its evangelical mission at the service of humanity. Resisting all forms of indifference, it appeals to consciences, as witnessed by the constant efforts of my venerable predecessor, ever

attentive to the cry of the poor, the needy and the marginalized, as well as to contemporary challenges, ranging from the protection of creation to artificial intelligence.

In addition to being a visible sign of your countries' respect for the Apostolic See, your presence here today is a gift for me. It allows me to renew the Church's aspiration — and my own — to reach out and embrace all individuals and peoples on the Earth, who need and yearn for truth, justice and peace! In a certain sense, my own life experience, which has spanned North America, South America and Europe, has been marked by this aspiration to transcend borders in order to encounter different peoples and cultures.

Through the constant and patient work of the Secretariat of State, I intend to strengthen understanding and dialogue with you and with your countries, many of which I have already had the grace to visit, especially during my time as Prior General of the Augustinians. I trust that God's providence will allow me further occasions to get to know the countries from which you come and enable me to have occasions to confirm in the faith our many brothers and sisters throughout the world and to build new bridges with all people of good will.

In our dialogue, I would like us to keep in mind three essential words that represent the pillars of the Church's missionary activity and the aim of the Holy See's diplomacy.

The first word is peace. All too often we consider it a “negative” word, indicative only of the absence of war and conflict, since opposition is a perennial part of human nature, frequently leading us to live in a constant “state of conflict” at home, at work and in society. Peace then appears simply as a respite, a pause between one dispute and another, given that, no matter how hard we try, tensions will always be present, a little like embers burning beneath the ashes, ready to ignite at any moment.

From a Christian perspective – but also in other religious traditions – peace is first and foremost a gift. It is the first gift of Christ: “My peace I give to you” (Jn 14:27). Yet it is an active and demanding gift. It engages and challenges each of us, regardless of our cultural background or religious affiliation, demanding first of all that we work on ourselves. Peace is built in the heart and from the heart, by eliminating pride and vindictiveness and carefully choosing our words. For words too, not only weapons, can wound and even kill.

In this regard, I believe that religions and interreligious dialogue can make a fundamental contribution to fostering a climate of peace. This naturally requires full respect for religious freedom in every country, since religious experience is an essential dimension of the human person. Without it, it is difficult, if not impossible, to bring about the purification of the heart necessary for building peaceful relationships.

This effort, in which all of us are called to take part, can begin to eliminate the root causes of all conflicts and every destructive urge for conquest. It demands a genuine willingness to engage in dialogue, inspired by the desire to communicate rather than clash. As a result, there is a need to give new life to multilateral diplomacy and to those international institutions conceived and designed primarily to remedy eventual disputes within the international community. Naturally, there must also be a resolve to halt the production of instruments of destruction and death, since, as Pope Francis noted in his last *Urbi et Orbi* Message: No peace is “possible without true disarmament [and] the requirement that every people provide for its own defence must not turn into a race to rearmament.” [1]

The second word is justice. Working for peace requires acting justly. As I have already mentioned, I chose my name thinking first of all of Leo XIII, the Pope of the first great social Encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*. In this time of epochal change, the Holy See cannot fail to make its voice heard in the face of the many imbalances and injustices that lead, not least, to unworthy working conditions and increasingly fragmented and conflict-ridden societies. Every effort should be made to overcome the global inequalities – between opulence and destitution – that are carving deep divides between continents, countries and even within individual societies.

It is the responsibility of government leaders to work to build harmonious and peaceful civil societies. This can be achieved above all by investing in the family, founded upon the stable union between a man and a woman, “a small but genuine society, and prior to all civil society.” [2] In addition, no one is exempted from striving to ensure respect for the dignity of every person, especially the most frail and vulnerable, from the unborn to the elderly, from the sick to the unemployed, citizens and immigrants alike.

My own story is that of a citizen, the descendant of immigrants, who in turn chose to emigrate. All of us, in the course of our lives, can find our-

selves healthy or sick, employed or unemployed, living in our native land or in a foreign country, yet our dignity always remains unchanged: it is the dignity of a creature willed and loved by God.

The third word is truth. Truly peaceful relationships cannot be built, also within the international community, apart from truth. Where words take on ambiguous and ambivalent connotations, and the virtual world, with its altered perception of reality, takes over unchecked, it is difficult to build authentic relationships, since the objective and real premises of communication are lacking.

For her part, the Church can never be exempted from speaking the truth about humanity and the world, resorting whenever necessary to blunt language that may initially create misunderstanding. Yet truth can never be separated from charity, which always has at its root a concern for the life and well-being of every man and woman. Furthermore, from the Christian perspective, truth is not the affirmation of abstract and disembodied principles, but an encounter with the person of Christ himself, alive in the midst of the community of believers. Truth, then, does not create division, but rather enables us to confront all the more resolutely the challenges of our time, such as migration, the ethical use of artificial intelligence and the protection of our beloved planet Earth. These are challenges that require commitment and cooperation on the part of all, since no one can think of facing them alone.

Dear Ambassadors,

My ministry has begun in the heart of a Jubilee Year, devoted in a particular way to hope. It is a time of conversion and renewal and, above all, an opportunity to leave conflicts behind and embark on a new path, confident that, by working together, each of us in accordance with his or her own sensibilities and responsibilities, can build a world in which everyone can lead an authentically human life in truth, justice and peace. It is my hope that this will be the case everywhere, starting with those places that suffer most grievously, like Ukraine and the Holy Land.

I thank you for all the work you are doing to build bridges between your countries and the Holy See, and I cordially impart my blessing to you, your families and your peoples. Thank you! Thank you for all the work that you do!

**47. ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIV  
TO MEMBERS OF THE “CENTESIMUS ANNUS PRO  
PONTIFICE” FOUNDATION  
Clementine Hall  
Saturday, 17 May 2025**

Good morning everyone!  
Dear brothers and sisters, welcome!

I thank the President and members of the Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice Foundation, and I greet all of you who are taking part in this annual International Conference and General Assembly.

The theme of this year’s Conference – “Overcoming Polarizations and Rebuilding Global Governance: The Ethical Foundations” – speaks to us of the deepest purpose of the Church’s social doctrine as a contribution to peace and dialogue in the service of building bridges of universal fraternity. Especially in this Easter season, we realize that the Risen Lord always goes before us, even at times when injustice and death seem to prevail. Let us help one another, as I said on the evening of my election, “to build bridges through dialogue and encounter, joining together as one people, always at peace.”

This is not something that happens by chance, but is rather an active and continuous interplay of grace and freedom, one that our meeting today seeks to respect and support.

Pope Leo XIII, who lived in an age of momentous and disruptive change, sought to promote peace by encouraging social dialogue between capital and labour, technology and human intelligence, and different political cultures and nations.

Pope Francis spoke of a “polycrisis” in describing the dramatic nature of our own age, marked by wars, climate change, growing inequalities, forced and contested migration, stigmatized poverty, disruptive technological innovations, job insecurity and precarious labour rights (Message to Participants in the General Assembly of the Pontifical Academy for Life, 3 March 2025). On such important issues, the Church’s social doctrine is called to provide insights that facilitate dialogue between science and conscience, and thus make an essential contribution to better un-

derstanding, hope and peace.

This doctrine helps us to realize that more important than our problems or eventual solutions is the way we approach them, guided by criteria of discernment, sound ethical principles and openness to God's grace. You have the opportunity to show that the Church's social doctrine, with its specific anthropological approach, seeks to encourage genuine engagement with social issues. It does not claim to possess a monopoly on truth, either in its analysis of problems or its proposal of concrete solutions. Where social questions are concerned, knowing how best to approach them is more important than providing immediate responses to why things happen or how to deal with them.

The aim is to learn how to confront problems, for these are always different, since every generation is new, and faces new challenges, dreams and questions.

This is a fundamental aspect of our attempts to build a "culture of encounter" through dialogue and social friendship. For many of our contemporaries, the words "dialogue" and "doctrine" can seem incompatible. Perhaps when we hear the word "doctrine," we tend to think of a set of ideas belonging to a religion. The word itself makes us feel less disposed to reflect, call things into question or seek new alternatives.

In the case of the Church's social doctrine, we need to make clear that the word "doctrine" has another, more positive meaning, without which dialogue itself would be meaningless. "Doctrine" can be a synonym of "science," "discipline" and "knowledge." Understood in this way, doctrine appears as the product of research, and hence of hypotheses, discussions, progress and setbacks, all aimed at conveying a reliable, organized and systematic body of knowledge about a given issue. Consequently, a doctrine is not the same as an opinion, but is rather a common, collective and even multidisciplinary pursuit of truth.

"Indoctrination" is immoral. It stifles critical judgement and undermines the sacred freedom of conscience, even if erroneous. It resists new notions and rejects movement, change or the evolution of ideas in the face of new problems. "Doctrine," on the other hand, as a serious, serene and rigorous discourse, aims to teach us primarily how to approach problems and, even more importantly, how to approach people. It also helps us to make prudential judgements when confronted with challenges. Seriousness, rigour and serenity are what we must learn from

every doctrine, including the Church's social doctrine.

In the context of the ongoing digital revolution, we must rediscover, emphasize and cultivate our duty to train others in critical thinking, countering temptations to the contrary, which can also be found in ecclesial circles. There is so little dialogue around us; shouting often replaces it, not infrequently in the form of fake news and irrational arguments proposed by a few loud voices.

Deeper reflection and study are essential, as well as a commitment to encounter and listen to the poor, who are a treasure for the Church and for humanity. Their viewpoints, though often disregarded, are vital if we are to see the world through God's eyes. Those born and raised far from the centers of power should not merely be taught the Church's social doctrine; they should also be recognized as carrying it forward and putting it into practice. Individuals committed to the betterment of society, popular movements and the various Catholic workers' groups are an expression of those existential peripheries where hope endures and springs anew. I urge you to let the voice of the poor be heard.

Dear friends, as the Second Vatican Council states, "in every age, the Church carries the responsibility of reading the signs of the times and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel, if she is to carry out her task. In language intelligible to every generation, she should be able to answer the ever-recurring questions which people ask about the meaning of this present life and of the life to come, and how one is related to the other" (*Gaudium et Spes*, 4).

I invite you, then, to participate actively and creatively in this discernment process, and thus contribute, with all of God's people, to the development of the Church's social doctrine in this age of significant social changes, listening to everyone and engaging in dialogue with all. In our day, there is a widespread thirst for justice, a desire for authentic fatherhood and motherhood, a profound longing for spirituality, especially among young people and the marginalized, who do not always find effective means of making their needs known. There is a growing demand for the Church's social doctrine, to which we need to respond.

I thank all of you for your commitment and for your prayers for my ministry, and I cordially bless you and your families, and all that you do. Thank you!

**48. ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER  
TO REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER CHURCHES AND  
ECCLESIAL COMMUNITIES,  
Monday, 19 May 2025**

Dear brothers and sisters,

With great joy I extend my cordial greetings to all of you, Representatives of other Churches and Ecclesial Communities, as well as of other religions, who participated in the inaugural celebration of my ministry as Bishop of Rome and Successor of Peter. I express fraternal affection to His All Holiness Bartholomew, His Beatitude Theophilos III and His Holiness Mar Awa III, and to each of you I am deeply grateful for your presence and prayers, which are a great comfort and encouragement.

One of the strong emphases of Pope Francis' pontificate was that of universal fraternity. In this regard the Holy Spirit really "urged" him to advance with great strides the initiatives already undertaken by previous Pontiffs, especially since Saint John XXIII. The Pope of Fratelli Tutti promoted both the ecumenical path and interreligious dialogue. He did so above all by cultivating interpersonal relations, in such a way that, without taking anything away from ecclesial bonds, the human trait of the encounter was always valued. May God help us to treasure his witness!

My election has taken place during the year of the 1700th anniversary of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea. That Council represents a milestone in the formulation of the Creed shared by all Churches and Ecclesial Communities. While we are on the journey to re-establishing full communion among all Christians, we recognise that this unity can only be unity in faith. As Bishop of Rome, I consider one of my priorities to be that of seeking the re-establishment of full and visible communion among all those who profess the same faith in God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Indeed, unity has always been a constant concern of mine, as witnessed by the motto I chose for my episcopal ministry: *In Illo uno unum*, an expression of Saint Augustine of Hippo that reminds us how we too, although we are many, "in the One — that is Christ — we are one" (Enarr. in Ps., 127, 3). What is more, our communion is realised to the extent that we meet in the Lord Jesus. The more faithful and obedient we are

to him, the more united we are among ourselves. We Christians, then, are all called to pray and work together to reach this goal, step by step, which is and remains the work of the Holy Spirit.

Aware, moreover, that synodality and ecumenism are closely linked, I would like to assure you of my intention to continue Pope Francis' commitment to promoting the synodal nature of the Catholic Church and developing new and concrete forms for an ever stronger synodality in ecumenical relations.

Our common path can and must also be understood in the broad sense of involving everyone, in the spirit of human fraternity that I mentioned above. Now is the time for dialogue and building bridges. I am therefore pleased and grateful for the presence of representatives of other religious traditions, who share the search for God and his will, which is always and only the will of love and life for men and women and for all creatures.

You have witnessed the remarkable efforts made by Pope Francis in favour of interreligious dialogue. Through his words and actions, he opened new avenues of encounter, to promote "the culture of dialogue as the path; mutual collaboration as the code of conduct; reciprocal understanding as the method and standard" (A Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together, Abu Dhabi, 4 February 2019). I thank the Dicastery for Interreligious Dialogue for the essential role it plays in this patient work of encouraging meetings and concrete exchanges aimed at building relationships based on human fraternity.

In a special way I greet our Jewish and Muslim brothers and sisters. Because of the Jewish roots of Christianity, all Christians have a special relationship with Judaism. The conciliar Declaration *Nostra Aetate* (no. 4) emphasises the greatness of the spiritual heritage shared by Christians and Jews, encouraging mutual knowledge and esteem. The theological dialogue between Christians and Jews remains ever important and close to my heart. Even in these difficult times, marked by conflicts and misunderstandings, it is necessary to continue the momentum of this precious dialogue of ours.

Relations between the Catholic Church and Muslims have been marked by a growing commitment to dialogue and fraternity, fostered by esteem for these our brothers and sisters who "worship God, who is one, living and subsistent, merciful and almighty, the Creator of heaven and

earth, who has also spoken to humanity” (ibid., 3). This approach, based on mutual respect and freedom of conscience, is a solid foundation for building bridges between our communities.

To all of you, representatives of other religious traditions, I express my gratitude for your participation in this meeting and for your contribution to peace. In a world wounded by violence and conflict, each of the communities represented here brings its own contribution of wisdom, compassion and commitment to the good of humanity and the preservation of our common home. I am convinced that if we are in agreement, and free from ideological and political conditioning, we can be effective in saying “no” to war and “yes” to peace, “no” to the arms race and “yes” to disarmament, “no” to an economy that impoverishes peoples and the Earth and “yes” to integral development.

The witness of our fraternity, which I hope we will be able to show with effective gestures, will certainly contribute to building a more peaceful world, something that all men and women of good will desire in their hearts.

Dear friends, thank you again for your closeness. Let us ask for God’s blessing in our hearts: may his infinite goodness and wisdom help us to live as his children and as brothers and sisters to each other, so that hope may grow in the world. I offer you my heartfelt gratitude.

**49. ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER  
TO PONTIFICAL MISSION SOCIETIES  
Clementine Hall  
Thursday, 22 May 2025**

Your Eminence, Your Excellencies,  
General Secretaries, National Directors and Personnel  
of the Pontifical Mission Societies,  
Dear brothers and sisters,

I offer a warm welcome to all of you, who have gathered from over one hundred and twenty countries to take part in the annual General Assembly of the Pontifical Mission Societies. I want to begin by expressing my gratitude to you and your associates for your dedicated service, which is indispensable to the Church’s mission of evangelization, as I

can personally attest from my own pastoral experience in the years of my ministry serving in Peru.

The Pontifical Mission Societies are effectively the “primary means” of awakening missionary responsibility among all the baptized and supporting ecclesial communities in areas where the Church is young (cf. Decree *Ad Gentes*, 38). We see this in the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, which provides aid for pastoral and catechetical programmes, the building of new churches, healthcare, and educational needs in mission territories.

The Society of the Holy Childhood, too, provides support for Christian formation programmes for children, in addition to caring for their basic needs and protection. Likewise, the Society of Saint Peter the Apostle helps to cultivate missionary vocations, priestly and religious, while the Missionary Union is committed to forming priests, religious men and women, and all the people of God for the Church’s missionary activity.

The promotion of apostolic zeal among the People of God remains an essential aspect of the Church’s renewal as envisioned by the Second Vatican Council, and is all the more urgent in our own day. Our world, wounded by war, violence and injustice, needs to hear the Gospel message of God’s love and to experience the reconciling power of Christ’s grace. In this sense, the Church herself, in all her members, is increasingly called to be “a missionary Church that opens its arms to the world, proclaims the word ... and becomes a leaven of harmony for humanity” (Homily, Mass for the Beginning of the Pontificate, 18 May 2025). We are to bring to all peoples, indeed to all creatures, the Gospel promise of true and lasting peace, which is possible because, in the words of Pope Francis, “the Lord has overcome the world and its constant conflict ‘by making peace through the blood of his cross’” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 229).

Hence we see the importance of fostering a spirit of missionary discipleship in all the baptized and a sense of the urgency of bringing Christ to all people. In this regard, I would like to thank you and your associates for your efforts each year in promoting World Mission Sunday on the second-to-last Sunday of October, which is of immense help to me in my solicitude for the Churches in areas which are under the care of the Dicastery for Evangelization.

Today, as in the days after Pentecost, the Church, led by the Holy Spirit, pursues her journey through history with trust, joy and courage as she

proclaims the name of Jesus and the salvation born of faith in the saving truth of the Gospel. The Pontifical Mission Societies are an important part of this great effort. In their work of coordinating missionary formation and animating a missionary spirit on the local level, I would ask the National Directors to give priority to visiting dioceses, parishes and communities, and in this way to help the faithful to recognize the fundamental importance of the missions and supporting our brothers and sisters in those areas of our world where the Church is young and growing.

Before concluding these words with you this morning, I would like to reflect with you on two distinctive elements of your identity as Pontifical Mission Societies. They can be described as, communion and universality. As Societies committed to sharing in the missionary mandate of the Pope and the College of Bishops, you are called to cultivate and further promote within your members the vision of the Church as the communion of believers, enlivened by the Holy Spirit, who enables us to enter into the perfect communion and harmony of the blessed Trinity. Indeed, it is in the Trinity that all things find their unity. This dimension of our Christian life and mission is close to my heart, and is reflected in the words of Saint Augustine that I chose for my episcopal service and now for my papal ministry: *In Illo uno unum*. Christ is our Saviour and in him we are one, a family of God, beyond the rich variety of our languages, cultures and experiences.

The appreciation of our communion as members of the Body of Christ naturally opens us to the universal dimension of the Church's mission of evangelization, and inspires us to transcend the confines of our individual parishes, dioceses and nations, in order to share with every nation and people the surpassing richness of the knowledge of Jesus Christ (cf. Phil 3:8).

A renewed focus on the Church's unity and universality corresponds precisely to the authentic charism of the Pontifical Mission Societies. As such, it should inspire the process of renewal of the statutes that you have initiated. In this regard, I express my trust that this process will confirm the members of the Societies worldwide in their vocation to be a leaven of missionary zeal within the People of God.

Dear friends, our celebration of this Holy Year challenges all of us to be "pilgrims of hope." Taking up the words that Pope Francis chose as the theme for this year's World Mission Day, I would conclude by encouraging you to continue to be "missionaries of hope among all peoples."

Commending you, your benefactors and all associated with your important work to the loving intercession of Mary, the Mother of the Church, I cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing as a pledge of lasting joy and peace in the Lord.

## **50. ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER**

**Audience Hall**

**Saturday, 24 May 2025**

Thank you! When the applause lasts longer than the address, I will have to make a longer address! So... be careful! Thank you! Thank you!

In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, peace be with you.

Dear brothers and sisters!

I am glad to be able to greet all of you who form the working communities of the Roman Curia, the Governorate and the Vicariate of Rome.

I greet the Heads of the Dicasteries and the other Superiors, the Office Heads and all the officials, as well as the authorities of Vatican City, the managers and the employees. And I am very happy that many family members are also present, taking advantage of the Saturday.

This first meeting of ours is certainly not the moment to make keynote speeches, but rather it is an opportunity for me to thank you for the service you carry out, and this service that I have, so to speak, “inherited” from my predecessors. Thank you indeed. Yes, as you know, I arrived only two years ago, when our beloved Pope Francis appointed me as Prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops. Then I left the diocese of Chiclayo, in Peru, and came to work here. What a change! And now, then... What can I say? Only what Simon Peter said to Jesus on Lake Tiberias: “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you” (Jn 21:17).

Popes pass, the Curia remains. This applies to every particular Church, for the episcopal Curias. And it also applies to the Curia of the Bishop of Rome. The Curia is the institution that preserves and transmits the historical memory of a Church, of the ministry of its bishops. This is very im-

portant. Memory is an essential element in a living organism. It is not only directed to the past, but nourishes the present and guides the future. Without memory, the path is lost, it loses its sense of direction.

Here, dear friends, is the first thought I would like to share with you: to work in the Roman Curia means to contribute to keeping the memory of the Apostolic See alive, in the vital sense I have just mentioned, so that the Pope's ministry may be implemented in the best way. And, by analogy, this can also be said of the services of Vatican City State.

Then, there is another aspect I would like to recall, complementary to that of memory, that is the missionary dimension of the Church and of every institution linked to the Petrine ministry. This was insisted upon a great deal by Pope Francis who, consistently with the project laid out in the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium*, reformed the Roman Curia from the perspective of evangelization, with the Apostolic Constitution *Praedicate Evangelium*. And he did this by following in the footsteps of his predecessors, especially Saint Paul VI and Saint John Paul II.

As I think you know, the experience of mission forms part of my life, and not only as a baptized person, as for all us Christians, but because as an Augustinian religious I was a missionary in Peru, and in the midst of the Peruvian people my pastoral vocation matured. I will never be able to thank the Lord enough for this gift! Then, the call to serve the Church here in the Roman Curia was a new mission, which I shared with you during these last two years. And still I continue it and will continue it, as long as God wills, in this service that has been entrusted to me.

Therefore, I repeat to you what I said in my first greeting, in the evening of 8 May: "Together, we must look for ways to be a missionary Church, a Church that builds bridges and encourages dialogue, a Church ever open to welcoming... with open arms, all those who are in need of our charity, our presence, our readiness to dialogue and our love". These words were addressed to the Church of Rome. And now I repeat them, thinking of the mission of this Church towards all the Churches and the entire world, of serving communion, unity, in charity and in truth. The Lord gave this task to Peter and his successors, and you all collaborate in different ways in this great task. Each one of you gives your contribution, carrying out your daily work with commitment and also with faith, because faith and prayer are like salt for food; they impart

flavour.

If, then, we must all cooperate in the great cause of unity and love, let us seek to do so first of all with our behaviour in everyday situations, starting also from the work environment. Each person can be a builder of unity with his attitudes towards colleagues, overcoming inevitable misunderstandings with patience, with humility, putting himself in the shoes of others, avoiding prejudices, and also with a good dose of humour, as Pope Francis taught us.

Dear brothers and sisters, thank you again from the bottom of my heart! We are in the month of May: let us invoke the Virgin Mary together, so that she may bless the Roman Curia and Vatican City, and also your families, especially children, the elderly and the sick and suffering.

Thank you!

So, let us say together: "Hail Mary..."

Thank you once again, best wishes!

**51. HOMAGE OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV  
TO THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF ROME  
Piazza dell'Aracoeli, at the foot of the Capitoline steps  
Sunday, 25 May 2025**

Lord Mayor,

I am very grateful to you for your welcome and for the words of greeting you have addressed to me. Together with you, I thank the civic administration, as well as the civil and military authorities, on the day of my inauguration as Bishop of Rome.

As I officially undertake the ministry of Pastor of this diocese, I feel the grave but exciting responsibility to serve all its members, having at heart first and foremost the faith of the people of God and therefore the common good of society. For this latter purpose we are collaborators, each one in his own institutional sphere. Just after the election, I reminded the brothers and sisters gathered in Saint Peter's Square that I am Christian with them and bishop for them: in a special way, today I can say that for you and with you I am Roman!

For two millennia the Church has been practising her apostolate in Rome, proclaiming Christ's Gospel and working in charity. The education of the young and assistance to those who are suffering, dedication to the lowliest and the fostering of the arts are expressions of that care for human dignity that we must support in every time, especially towards the small, the weak and the poor. In the holy year of the Jubilee, this concern is extended to pilgrims from every part of the world, and it also benefits from the profuse commitment of the Capitoline administration, for which I express my keen gratitude.

Lord Mayor, I hope that Rome, incomparable for the wealth of her historic and artistic heritage, may also always be distinguished for those values of humanity and civilization that draw their lifeblood from the Gospel. With these sentiments, I impart my Apostolic Blessing upon this city and all her inhabitants.

**52. PAPAL MASS FOR THE POSSESSION OF THE CHAIR  
OF THE BISHOP OF ROME  
GREETING OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV  
Lateran Basilica  
6th Sunday in the Time of Easter, 25 May 2025**

[Holy Father's words of greeting pronounced from the central Loggia of the Lateran Basilica for the Blessing of the city of Rome at the end of the Eucharistic Celebration.]

Peace be with you!

Dear brothers and sisters, community of Rome, it gives me great pleasure to be here with you this evening, in this liturgical act in which we have celebrated my inauguration as your new Bishop of Rome. Thank you all!

Let us live our faith, especially during this Jubilee Year, in search of hope; but seeking to be ourselves the witness that offers hope to the world. A world that suffers a great deal of pain due to wars, violence and poverty! But the Lord asks us as Christians always to be this living witness. To live our faith, feeling in our heart that Jesus Christ is present and to know that He always accompanies us on our journey.

Thank you for walking together! Let us all walk together! Always count on me, as a Christian with you and Bishop for you. Thank you all!

[Blessing]

Good evening to you all! Let us live with this joy, always. Thank you.

**53. GREETING OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV**  
**Basilica of Saint Mary Major**  
**6th Sunday in the Time of Easter, 25 May 2025**

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you!

Good evening to you all. Thank you for being here! Thank you for being here, in front of this Basilica, this afternoon, this evening, when we celebrate, all together, as members of the diocese of Rome, the presence of its new Bishop. I am very happy to see you all here, and I thank you from my heart.

I thank all of those who work in this Basilica, the two Cardinals who are accompanying me this evening, and the many people who have dedicated themselves to helping us live this, our life of prayer, of devotion, and who above all help us to be closer to the Mother of Jesus, the Mother of God, Mary Most Holy. It is a beautiful opportunity to renew this devotion to Mary, *Salus Populi Romani*, who many times has accompanied Rome in her needs.

Let us ask God, by the intercession of his Mother, to bless all of you, your families, and your loved ones, and to help us all to walk together in the Church, united as the one family of God.

Let us say together:

[Hail Mary, full of Grace...]

[Blessing]

Good evening to you all, and many thanks!

**54. GREETING OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV  
AT THE END OF THE MASS PRESIDED OVER BY CARD. ARINZE,  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE JUBILEE PILGRIMAGE FOR PEACE IN  
AFRICA**

**Altar of the Chair of St Peter's Basilica  
Monday, 26 May 2025**

Good afternoon to all of you, especially to the representatives.

You can be seated, but I will stand.

I just came very briefly to greet all of you and to welcome you to Rome, to the Vatican, to Saint Peter's Basilica, and to join you very briefly in this Jubilee pilgrimage during this Holy Year, a year which inspires us all and invites us all to look for hope, but also to be signs of hope.

How important it is that each and every baptized person feel himself or herself to be called by God to be a sign of hope in the world today.

It is our faith that gives us strength. It is our faith that enables us to see the light of Jesus Christ in our lives and to understand how important it is to live our faith. Not only on Sundays, not only during a pilgrimage, but each and every day so that we will be filled with the hope that only Jesus Christ can give us and that all of us together will continue to walk united as brothers and sisters to praise our God; to recognize that everything we have and everything we are is a gift from God, and to place those gifts at the service of others.

I am very happy to be able to greet you all for just a very brief moment this afternoon, but to say to each and every one of you: Thank you for living your life, your faith in Jesus Christ.

You are already very well accompanied by their Eminences, Cardinal Turkson, Cardinal Arinze, as well as Archbishop Fortunatus, and all of us together, filled with the great witness that you are all giving and that the continent of Africa gives to the whole world.

We say, "Thank you, Lord Jesus, and may your name be praised." God bless you all.

So I will conclude with the blessing. May the Lord be with you. May

Almighty God bless you, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.  
May God's peace go with you always.

**55. GREETING OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV  
TO THE S.S.C. NAPOLI FOOTBALL TEAM  
Clementine Hall  
Tuesday, 27 May 2025**

Perhaps they didn't want to applaud, because in the press it is said that I am a Rome fan... but welcome! This is what the press says. Not everything you read in the press is true!

Dear friends,

Welcome! And congratulations for your victory in the Championship! It is a great celebration for the city of Naples!

And it is precisely on this that I would like to reflect with you. To win the Championship is a milestone that one reaches at the end of a long journey, where what counts the most is not the one-off exploit, or the extraordinary performance of a champion. The Championship is won by the team, and when I say "team", I mean the players, the trainer with the entire team, and the sports association.

Therefore, I am truly happy to welcome you now, to highlight this aspect of your success, which I consider the most important. And I would say that it is so also from a social point of view. We know how popular football is in Italy, and practically all over the world. And so, from this perspective, it seems to me that the social value of an event like this, which goes beyond the merely technical and sporting fact, is the example of a team – in the broadest sense – working together, in which the talents of the individuals are placed at the service of the whole.

And there is one last thing it is important to me to say, taking advantage of this occasion. It regards the educational aspect. Unfortunately, when sport becomes a business, it risks losing the values that make it educational, and can even become anti-educational. It is necessary to keep a lookout for this, especially with regard to teenagers. I appeal to parents and sports managers: we must be very careful of the moral quality of the

experience of sport at competitive level, because the human growth of the young is at stake. I think we understand each other, and there is no need for many words.

I thank you for your visit. And congratulations again! Congratulations also from a lady who is cooking for me in these days, and who is from Naples, and says to you: best wishes! She would like to be here too, Mrs. Rosa, who is a big fan!

May the Lord bless you all and your families. All the best!

**56. ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIV  
TO THE MOVEMENTS AND ASSOCIATIONS OF THE  
“ARENA OF PEACE” (VERONA)  
Clementine Hall  
Friday, 30 May 2025**

Dear brothers and sisters, peace be with you!

I am pleased to welcome you, members of the Movements and Associations of the “Arena of Peace.” A year ago, you launched the great “Arena of Peace” event in Verona, with Pope Francis in attendance. In a particular way, I would like to thank Bishop Domenico Pompili of Verona and the Comboni Fathers. On that occasion, the Pope stated once again that building peace starts by standing alongside victims and seeing things from their point of view. This approach is essential for disarming hearts, approaches and mentalities, and for denouncing the injustices of a system that kills and is based on the throwaway culture.

How can we forget the courageous embrace between Maoz Inon, an Israeli whose parents were killed by Hamas, and Aziz Sarah, a Palestinian whose brother was killed by the Israeli army. They are now friends and work with one another. That gesture remains as a testimony and sign of hope. We thank them for being here today.

The path to peace demands hearts and minds trained in concern for others and capable of perceiving the common good in today’s world. For the road to peace involves everyone and leads to the fostering of right relationships between all living beings. As John Paul II pointed out, peace is an indivisible good; it is either everyone’s or no one’s (cf. Sollici-

tudo rei socialis, 26). It can truly be attained and enjoyed as a reality of life and integral development only if there exists in people's consciences "a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good" (ibid., 38).

In an age like our own, marked by speed and immediacy, we need to recover the patience required for this process to occur. History and practical experience have taught us that authentic peace takes shape from the ground up, beginning with places, communities and local institutions, and by listening to what they have to tell us. In this way, we come to realize that peace is possible when disagreements and the conflicts they entail are not set aside, but acknowledged, understood and surmounted.

That is why your work as popular movements and associations is especially valuable. Through concrete action "from below," in dialogue with all parties and with the creativity and ingenuity born of a culture of peace, you are pursuing projects and activities at the concrete service of individuals and the common good. In this way, you generate hope.

Dear brothers and sisters, all too much violence exists in the world and our societies. Amid wars, terrorism, human trafficking and widespread aggression, our children and young people need to be able to experience the culture of life, dialogue, and mutual respect. Above all, they need the witness of men and women who embody a different and non-violent way of living. From local and everyday situations up to the international order, whenever those who have suffered injustice and violence resist the temptation to seek revenge, they become the most credible agents of non-violent peacebuilding processes. Non-violence, as a method and a style, must distinguish our decisions, our relationships and our actions.

The Gospel and the Church's social doctrine are a constant source of support for Christians in this effort. They can also act as a compass for everyone, since the fostering of a culture of peace is a task entrusted to all, believers and non-believers alike, who must advance it through reflection and a praxis inspired by the dignity of the person and the common good.

If you want peace, prepare institutions of peace. Increasingly we realize that this cannot simply involve political institutions, whether national or international, but requires all institutions – educational, economic and

social. The Encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* frequently spoke of the need to pass from “I” to “we”, in a spirit of solidarity that needs to find institutional expression. For this reason, I encourage you to remain committed and present: present within history as a leaven of unity, communion and fraternity. Fraternity needs to be recovered, loved, experienced, proclaimed and witnessed, in the confident hope that it is indeed possible, thanks to the love of God “poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit” (Rom 5:5).

Dear friends, I thank you for your presence today. I pray for you, that you may continue to work with patient perseverance. I accompany all of you with my blessing.

**57. ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV**  
**Lourdes Grotto in the Vatican Gardens**  
**Saturday, 31 May 2025**

Dear brothers and sisters,

With joy, I join you in this prayer Vigil at the conclusion of the Month of May. It is a gesture of faith with which, in a simple and devoted way, we gather under the maternal mantle of Mary.

This year, then, it recalls some important aspects of the Jubilee we are celebrating: praise, the journey, hope, and above all, faith contemplated and manifested chorally.

You have prayed the Holy Rosary together: prayer, as John Paul II highlighted, with a Marian appearance and a Christological heart, which “has all the depth of the Gospel message in its entirety” (Apostolic Letter *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, 16 October 2002, 1).

And, in effect, meditating on the Joyful Mysteries, along the way, you entered and stopped, as in a pilgrimage, in many places of the life of Jesus: in the house of Nazareth, contemplating the Annunciation; in that of Zechariah, contemplating the Visitation, which we are celebrating today; in the grotto of Bethlehem, contemplating the Nativity; in the Temple of Jerusalem, contemplating the presentation and then the finding of Jesus. You have been accompanied, in the Hail Mary repeated with faith, by the words of the Angel to the Mother of God: “Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!” (Lk 1:28), and those of Elizabeth who

welcomes her with joy: “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!” (Lk 1:42).

Your stops have thus been cadenced by the Word of God, which has marked, with its rhythm, their progress, stops and departures, just as it was for the people of Israel in the desert, on the journey towards the promised Land.

Let us look, then, at our existence as a journey following Jesus, to be travelled, as we have done this evening, together with Mary. And let us ask the Lord to be able to praise him every day, “with our lives and our tongues, with hearts and mouths, with our voices and our behaviour” (Saint Augustine, Sermon 256, 1), avoiding discord: the tongue in harmony with life and the mouth with the conscience (cf. *ibid.*).

I greet the Cardinals present, the bishops, the priests, the consecrated persons and all the faithful. I wish to express, in particular, my affection and gratitude to the Benedictine Sisters of the Mater Ecclesiae Monastery, who support our community and our work with their hidden and constant prayer.

May the joy of this moment remain and grow in us, “in our personal and family lives, in every environment, especially in the life of this family which here in the Vatican serves the universal Church” (Benedict XVI, Conclusion of the Month of May, 31 May 2012). May the Lord bless us and accompany us always, and may Mary intercede for us. Thank you!

**58.GREETING OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV  
TO CYCLISTS IN THE GIRO D’ITALIA  
PASSING THROUGH VATICAN CITY STATE  
Square of the Roman Protomartyrs  
Sunday, 1 June 2025**

;(In Italian]

Good morning everyone! Welcome to the Vatican!

It is a pleasure to be able to greet you in this last leg of the Giro d’Italia. I hope that it has truly been a beautiful day for you all. Know that you are models for young people all over the world. The Giro d’Italia really is well-loved, and not only in Italy. Cycling is very important, as is sport in

general. I thank you for everything you do, and be true models! And I hope that, just as you have learned to care for the body, the spirit too is always blessed, and that you are always attentive to the human being as a whole: body, mind and spirit. God bless you!

May God bless all of you on this last part of the Giro d'Italia. Congratulations to all of you, and may you know that you are always welcome here in the Vatican, you are always welcomed by the Church which represents God's love for all people.

And may the blessing of Almighty God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, come upon all of you and remain with you forever.

Congratulations! Tanti auguri a tutti! [Best wishes to you all!].

**59 ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV**  
**Sistine Chapel**  
**Monday, 2 June 2025**

Dear brothers and sisters!

We are meeting today in the Sistine Chapel during the Jubilee Year of Hope, in order to commemorate an Apostle of Hope: Blessed Iuliu Hossu, the Greek-Catholic Bishop of Cluj-Gherla and a martyr for the faith during the Communist persecution in Romania. Today, in a certain sense, he enters this Chapel, having been created a Cardinal in pectore by Saint Paul VI on 28 April 1969, while imprisoned for his fidelity to the Church of Rome.

I gladly greet all those present: the representatives of the Greek-Catholic Church in Romania, the civil Authorities and, in particular, the Honourable Silviu Vexler, President of the Federation of Jewish Communities in Romania.

We are celebrating a special year honouring Cardinal Iuliu Hossu, a symbol of fraternity transcending all ethnic and religious boundaries. The process of awarding him the title of "Righteous Among the Nations," begun in 2022, was motivated by his courageous commitment to supporting and saving the Jews of Northern Transylvania when, between 1940 and 1944, the Nazis were carrying out their heinous plan of deporting them to extermination camps.

At enormous risk to himself and to the Greek-Catholic Church, Blessed Hossu undertook extensive activities on behalf of the Jews aimed at preventing their deportation. In the spring of 1944, as preparations were being made in Cluj-Napoca (in Hungarian Kolozsvár) and other cities in Transylvania, to establish ghettos for the Jews, he mobilized the Greek-Catholic clergy and faithful through a pastoral letter published on 2 April 1944. We also know of this through the testimony of Moshe Carmilly-Weinberger, former Chief Rabbi of the Jewish community of Cluj-Napoca. In that letter, he launched a vibrant and deeply human appeal. "Our plea", he wrote, "is addressed to all of you, venerable brothers and beloved children, to help the Jews not only with your thoughts, but also with your sacrifice, knowing that there is no act more noble to be carried out today than providing Christian and Romanian assistance, born of ardent human charity. Our first concern in the present moment must be this work of relief." According to the personal testimony of the former Chief Rabbi, Cardinal Hossu helped save the lives of thousands of Jews in northern Transylvania between 1940 and 1944.

The hope shown by this great Pastor was that of a man of faith, who knows that the gates of evil will not prevail against God's work.

His life was a witness of faith lived to the full, in prayer and devotion to others. A man of dialogue and a prophet of hope, he was beatified by Pope Francis on 2 June 2019 in Blaj. In the homily on that occasion, the Pope quoted a phrase of the Cardinal that summed up his entire life: "God has sent us into this darkness of suffering in order to offer forgiveness and to pray for the conversion of all."

These words embody the spirit of the martyrs: an unshakeable faith in God, devoid of hatred and coupled with a spirit of mercy that turns suffering into love for one's persecutor. Even now, those words remain as a prophetic invitation to overcome hatred through forgiveness and to live one's faith with dignity and courage.

The Church is close to the sufferings of the Jewish people, which culminated in the tragedy of the Holocaust. She knows well what pain, marginalization, and persecution mean. Precisely for this reason, she feels committed, as a matter of conscience, to building a society centered on respect for human dignity.

Cardinal Hossu's message remains most timely. What he did for the

Jews of Romania, and his efforts to protect his neighbour in spite of all risks and dangers, today make him a model of freedom, courage and generosity, even to the point of making the supreme sacrifice. That is why his motto, “Our Faith is Our Life,” ought to become the motto of each one of us. It is my prayerful hope that his example, which anticipated the teaching later expressed in the Declaration *Nostra Aetate* of the Second Vatican Council — the sixtieth anniversary of which is approaching — together with your friendship, will serve as a beacon for today’s world. Let us say “No!” to violence in all its forms, and even more so when it is perpetrated against those who are defenseless and vulnerable, like children and families.

May God bless each of you and your loved ones!

**60. ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER  
TO SUPERIORS AND OFFICIALS OF THE SECRETARIAT OF STATE  
Clementine Hall  
Thursday, 5 June 2025**

Your Eminence, Cardinal Parolin  
Your Excellencies, dear bishops and priests,  
Sisters and brothers!

First of all, I thank the Secretary of State for his words of introduction and for the ongoing assistance that he is providing me as I take the first steps of my Pontificate.

I am pleased to be here with you, who offer a precious service to the life of the Church by helping to carry out the mission entrusted to me. Indeed, as *Praedicate Evangelium* affirms, the Secretariat of State, as the Papal Secretariat directed by the Secretary of State, provides close assistance to the Roman Pontiff in the exercise of his supreme mission” (cf. nn. 44-45).

I am comforted by the knowledge that I am not alone and that I can share the responsibility of my universal ministry with you.

This is not in the prepared text, but I can say with great sincerity that in these few weeks – a month has not even passed yet since beginning

my Petrine ministry – it is evident to me that the Pope cannot work alone. There is great necessity to rely on the assistance of many people in the Holy See, and in a special way on all of you in the Secretariat of State. I offer my heartfelt thanks!

The history of this institution dates back, as we know, to the end of the fifteenth century. Over time, it has taken on an increasingly universal character and has grown considerably, acquiring additional tasks in response to emerging needs both within the Church and in relations with States and international organizations. Currently, almost half of you are lay faithful. And there are more than fifty women, both lay and religious.

This development means that, today, the Secretariat of State itself reflects the face of the Church. It is a large community working alongside the Pope: together we share the questions, difficulties, challenges and hopes of the People of God throughout the world. In doing so, we always express two essential dimensions: incarnation and catholicity.

We are incarnate in time and history since God chose the human condition and the languages of humanity. The Church, therefore, is called to follow the same path, in order that the joy of the Gospel may reach everyone, mediated through today's cultures and languages. At the same time, we always seek to maintain a Catholic, universal outlook that allows us to appreciate different cultures and sensibilities. In this way, we can be a driving force committed to building communion between the Church of Rome and the local Churches, as well as friendly relationships in the international community.

In recent decades, these two dimensions — being incarnate in time and having a universal outlook — have become increasingly constitutive of the Curia's work. We have been guided along this path by the reform of the Roman Curia carried out by Saint Paul VI who, inspired by the vision of the Second Vatican Council, strongly felt the urgency for the Church to be attentive to the challenges of history, taking into account “the rapid pace of modern life” and “the changed conditions of our times” (*Regimini Ecclesiae Universae*, 15 August 1967). At the same time, he reaffirmed the need for a service that expresses the catholicity of the Church, and to this end he decreed that “those present in the Apostolic See to govern it, should be called from all parts of the world” (*ibid.*).

Incarnation reminds us, then, of the concreteness of reality and the specific, particular issues dealt with by the various curial institutions. At the

same time, universality evokes the mystery of the multifaceted unity of the Church and requires a subsequent effort of synthesis to assist the Pope's mission. It is precisely the Secretariat of State that offers this service of unification and synthesis. Indeed, Paul VI — well versed in the Roman Curia — chose to restructure this office, effectively designating it as a point of connection, and thus establishing its fundamental role of coordinating the other Dicasteries and Institutions of the Apostolic See.

The recent Apostolic Constitution *Praedicate Evangelium* speaks of the coordinating role of the Secretariat of State as one of the many responsibilities entrusted to the Section for General Affairs, under the direction of the Substitute with the assistance of the Assessor (cf. 45-46). Along with the Section for General Affairs, the Constitution also includes the Section for Relations with States and International Organizations, which is directed by the Secretary with the help of two Undersecretaries.

This Section is responsible, particularly in this delicate moment of history, for the diplomatic and political relations of the Holy See with States and other subjects of international law. The Section for Diplomatic Personnel, with its Secretary and Undersecretary, is tasked for its part with assisting Pontifical Representations and the members of the Diplomatic Corps in Rome and throughout the world.

I know that these tasks are very demanding and, at times, may not be well understood. This is why I wish to express my closeness to you and, above all, my heartfelt gratitude. Thank you for the skills you place at the service of the Church, for your work — which almost always goes unnoticed — and for the evangelical spirit that inspires it. And allow me, as a result of my gratitude, to make an appeal, referring once again to Saint Paul VI: let this place not be clouded by ambition or rivalry; instead, let it be a true community of faith and charity, of “brothers and sisters, and children of the Pope,” who give themselves generously for the good of the Church (cf. Address to the Roman Curia, 21 September 1963).

I entrust you all to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church. I thank you because I know that you pray for me – I hope! – every day, and I warmly bless each of you, your loved ones, and your work. Thank you!

**61. ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER  
TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE GENERAL CHAPTERS OF THE  
SOCIETY OF AFRICAN MISSIONS,  
OF THE THIRD ORDER REGULAR OF ST FRANCIS,  
OF THE FORMATORS OF THE SERVANTS OF THE PARACLETE  
Consistory Hall  
Friday, 6 June 2025**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
Peace be with you!

Dear brothers and sisters, welcome!

I greet the General Superiors present, especially those recently elected, together with the members of their governing bodies, and all of you who belong to the Third Order Regular of Saint Francis – who is the new General? Was he already elected? Ah, not yet, all right – the Society of African Missions and the Congregation of the Servants of the Paraclete.

Many of you are attending this meeting as part of your General Chapters, which are important moments for your life and for the life of the entire Church. Let us pray first of all to the Lord for your Institutes and for all consecrated persons, that “seeking God, and God alone, before all else, they may join contemplation, by which they cleave to God by mind and heart, to apostolic love, by which they endeavour to be identified with the work of redemption” (Perfectae Caritatis, 5).

You represent three charismatic realities that emerged at different times in the Church’s history and in response to various specific needs. Yet you are united with and complementary to each other, within the harmonious beauty of the mystical body of Christ (cf. Lumen Gentium, 7).

The oldest foundation present is that of the Third Order Regular of Saint Francis, which dates back to the saint of Assisi himself, although it was later elevated to an Order by Pope Nicholas V (cf. Bull Pastoralis Officii, 20 July 1447). The themes you are addressing in the 113th General Chapter — community life, formation and vocations — in some way concern all God’s great family. However, as the title you have given to your work indicates, it is important that you address them in the light of your “penitential” charism. This reminds us that, in the words of Saint Francis himself, only through a constant journey of conversion can we offer our

brothers and sisters “the fragrant words of our Lord Jesus Christ” (First Letter to the Faithful, 19).

The Society of African Missions is more recent, founded on 8 December 1856 by Venerable Bishop Melchior de Marion Brésillac, and is a sign of that missionary spirit which is at the very heart of the Church’s life (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, 273). Dear brothers, the history of your Institute bears witness to this. Fidelity to your mission, by which your communities have over time surmounted countless difficulties from within and without, has enabled you to grow and even draw from adversity the inspiration to set out for new apostolic horizons in Africa and other parts of the world. Your Founder’s advice in this regard remains ever timely: in your proclamation, be faithful to the simplicity of the apostolic preaching, and be always ready to embrace the “folly of the Cross” (cf. 1 Cor 1:17-25) with sincerity and peace, even in the face of the world’s incomprehension and derision. Be free of all conditioning as men “filled” with Christ, and thus capable of bringing your brothers and sisters to an encounter with him, since you are motivated by a sole aspiration: to proclaim the Gospel to the whole world (cf. Phil 1:12-14, 21). What a great sign for the entire Church and the world!

We now come to the most recent Institute: the Servants of the Paraclete. You are Servants of that Spirit who dwells within us (cf. Rom 8:9) by the gift of Baptism and who heals “quod est saucium” — whatever is wounded — as we will sing in a few days’ time in the Pentecost Sequence. Servants of the Spirit of healing: that is what Father Gerald Fitzgerald wanted you to be when in 1942 he began your work of caring for troubled priests, “Pro Christo sacerdote,” to use the words of your motto (cf. *Constitutions*, 4.4). Since then, in various parts of the world, you have carried out your ministry of humble, patient, delicate and discreet closeness to the deeply wounded, offering them therapeutic paths combining a simple and intense spiritual life — both personal and communal — with highly qualified professional assistance suited to their needs. Your presence also reminds us of something important: although all of us are called to be ministers of Christ, the physician of souls, for our brothers and sisters (cf. Lk 5:31-32), we are ourselves frail and in need of healing. As Saint Augustine said, using the image of a ship, all of us “have in this life some cracks in our frail mortality, through which sin trickles in from the waves of this world” (Serm. 278, 13). And the sainted Bishop of Hippo proposes a remedy for evil: “Lest we sink,” he says, “let hold us fast to this exhortation... Let us forgive” (ibid.). Yes, let us forgive, so that everywhere, “in our parishes, communities, asso-

ciations and movements, in a word, wherever there are Christians, everyone [may] find an oasis of mercy” (Misericordiae Vultus, 12).

Dear friends, thank you for your visit in this hall today, which manifests three luminous dimensions of the Church’s beauty: commitment to conversion, enthusiasm for mission and the warmth of mercy. Thank you for all the work you do throughout the world. I bless you and during this novena of Pentecost, I pray that you may be ever more docile instruments of the Holy Spirit, in accordance with God’s plans. Thank you!

**62. ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIV  
TO THE MODERATORS OF LAY ASSOCIATIONS, ECCLESIAL  
MOVEMENTS  
AND NEW COMMUNITIES  
Clementine Hall  
Friday, 6 June 2025**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Peace be with you!

Your Eminence, dear brother Bishops,  
Dear brothers and sisters!

I am pleased to receive you in the course of this annual meeting organized by the Dicastery for the Laity, the Family and Life for moderators, international leaders and delegates of ecclesial associations recognized or established by the Holy See.

You represent the thousands of people who live out their faith and exercise their apostolate within associations, movements and communities. I would like to thank you above all for your work of guidance and leadership. Supporting and encouraging our brothers and sisters on their Christian journey calls for responsibility and commitment, but also, at times, entails problems and misunderstandings. Yet it remains a necessary and important task, and the Church is grateful to you for all the good that you do.

The gift of associations and charisms

The groups to which you belong differ from one another in kind and in history, and all are important to the Church. Some were founded to carry out a common apostolic, charitable, or liturgical project, or to support Christian witness in specific social settings. Others, however, originated with a charismatic inspiration, an initial charism that gave rise to a movement, a new form of spirituality and of evangelization.

The desire to work together for a common purpose reflects an essential reality: no one is Christian alone! We are part of a people, a body established by the Lord.

When speaking of Jesus' first disciples, Saint Augustine once said, "They became God's temple, not only as individuals; together they were built into the temple of God" (En. in Ps. 131, 5). The Christian life is not lived in isolation, as a kind of intellectual or sentimental experience, confined to the mind and the heart. It is lived with others, in a group and in community, because the risen Christ is present wherever disciples gather in his name.

The lay apostolate was strongly encouraged by the Second Vatican Council, particularly in its Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity. There we read that apostolic associations "are very important also because the apostolate often calls for concerted action, either in ecclesial communities or in various spheres.

Associations established for carrying on a common apostolate support their members, train them for the apostolate, and carefully assign and direct their apostolic activities. As a result, a much richer harvest can be hoped for from them than if each member were to act on his or her own" (No. 18).

Other realities were born of a charism: the charism of a founder or a founding group, or a charism inspired by that of a religious Institute. This too is an essential dimension of the Church's life. I would like to invite you to consider charisms in relation to grace, to the gift of the Spirit. The Letter *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*, as you know, states that the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the sacrament of Holy Orders exist precisely so that "the objective offer of grace" made through "the sacraments, the normative proclamation of the word, and pastoral care" may always remain alive and present among the faithful (No. 14). Charisms, on the other hand, "are freely distributed by the Holy Spirit so that sacramental grace may bear fruit in Christian life in different ways and at every level" (n. 15).

Consequently, everything in the Church is understood in reference to grace: the institution exists so that grace may always be offered, and charisms are given so that this grace may be received and bear fruit. Without charisms, there is a risk that Christ's grace, offered in abundance, may not find good soil to receive it.

That is the reason why God raises up charisms: to awaken in hearts a desire to encounter Christ and a thirst for the divine life that he offers us. In a word, grace!

In recalling this, I would like to reaffirm, following my Predecessors and in accordance with the Church's Magisterium, especially since the Second Vatican Council, that hierarchical gifts and charismatic gifts "are co-essential to the divine constitution of the Church founded by Jesus" (SAINT JOHN PAUL II, Message for the World Congress of Ecclesial Movements, 27 May 1998). Thanks to the charisms that gave rise to your movements and communities, many people have drawn closer to Christ and have found hope in life. They have discovered the motherhood of the Church and they want to be helped to grow in faith, in community life and works of charity, and, through evangelization, to bring to others the gift they have received.

#### Unity and Mission, in Union with the Pope

Unity and mission are two essential aspects of the Church's life and two priorities of the Petrine ministry. For this reason, I ask all ecclesial associations and movements to cooperate faithfully and generously with the Pope, above all in these two areas.

First of all, by being a leaven of unity. All of you constantly experience the spiritual communion that unites you. It is the communion that the Holy Spirit brings about in the Church. It is a unity that has its foundation in Christ, who draws us to himself and thus unites us with one another. Saint Paulinus of Nola once wrote in a letter to Saint Augustine: "We have one Head, one grace that fills us, we live on one Bread, we walk on one path and we live in the same house... We are one, in both the spirit and the body of the Lord. If we separate ourselves from that One, we become nothing" (Ep. 30, 2).

Seek to spread everywhere this unity that you yourselves experience in your groups and communities, always in communion with the Church's

Pastors and in solidarity with other ecclesial realities. Draw close to all those whom you meet, so that your charisms may ever be at the service of the unity of the Church, and be “a leaven of unity, communion, and fraternity” (cf. Homily, 18 May 2025) in our world, so torn by discord and violence.

Secondly, mission. The Church’s mission has been an important part of my own pastoral experience and has shaped my spiritual life. You too have experienced this spiritual journey. Your encounter with the Lord and the new life that filled your hearts gave rise to your desire to make him known to others. You have involved many others, and devoted much time, enthusiasm and energy to sharing the Gospel in the most distant places, in the most challenging environments, enduring difficulties and failures. Always keep this missionary zeal alive in your midst: today as always, movements have a fundamental role in the work of evangelization.

Among you, there are many generous, well-trained people, with “hands-on” experience. This is a treasure that needs to be put to good use, with a constant eye to new situations and challenges. Place your talents at the service of the Church’s mission, whether in places of first evangelization or in your parishes and local ecclesial communities, in order to reach those who, albeit distant, are often waiting, without being aware of it, to hear God’s word of life.

## Conclusion

Dear friends, today we are meeting for the first time. God willing, we will have other opportunities to get to know each other better, but in the meantime, I encourage you to press forward on your journey. Always keep the Lord Jesus at the centre! This is the essential thing, and charisms are meant to serve this purpose. They lead to an encounter with Christ; they foster human and spiritual growth and development, and they help to build up the Church. In this sense, all of us are called to imitate Christ, who emptied himself to enrich us (cf. Phil 2:7). Those who join with others in pursuing an apostolic goal and those who enjoy a charism are called alike to enrich others through the emptying of self. It is a source of freedom and great joy.

Thank you for being who you are, and for all that you do. I entrust you to the protection of Mary, Mother of the Church, and I cordially impart my Blessing to you, and to all those whom you represent. Thank you!

**63. ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER  
TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE SYMPOSIUM  
“NICAEA AND THE CHURCH OF THE THIRD MILLENNIUM:  
TOWARDS CATHOLIC-ORTHODOX UNITY”  
HELD AT THE PONTIFICAL UNIVERSITY OF SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS  
Saturday, 7 June 2025**

Peace be with you!

Your Eminence,  
Your Excellencies,  
Distinguished Professors,  
Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I offer a warm welcome to all of you, who are taking part in the Symposium “Nicaea and the Church of the Third Millennium: Towards Catholic-Orthodox Unity,” jointly organized by *Æcumenicum* — the Institute for Ecumenical Studies of the Angelicum — and the International Orthodox Theological Association. In a special way, my greeting goes to the representatives of the Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches, many of whom honored me by their presence at the Mass inaugurating my Pontificate.

Before I continue my formal remarks, I would just like to apologize for being a little late, and also ask for your patience with me. I am not yet one month into the new job, so there are a lot of learning experiences. But I am very happy to be with you this morning.

I am pleased to see that the Symposium is resolutely oriented toward the future. The Council of Nicaea is not merely an event of the past but a compass that must continue to guide us towards the full visible unity of Christians. The First Ecumenical Council is foundational for the common journey that Catholics and Orthodox have undertaken together since the Second Vatican Council. For the Eastern Churches, which commemorate its celebration in their liturgical calendar, the Council of Nicaea is not simply one Council among others or the first in a series, but the Council par excellence, which promulgated the norm of the Christian faith, the confession of faith of the “318 Fathers.”

The three themes of your Symposium are especially relevant for our ecumenical journey. First, the faith of Nicaea. As the International Theologi-

cal Commission observed in its recent Document for the 1700th anniversary of Nicaea, the year 2025 represents “an invaluable opportunity to emphasise that, what we have in common is much stronger, quantitatively and qualitatively, than what divides us. Together, we believe in the Triune God, in Christ as truly human and truly God, and in salvation through Jesus Christ, according to the Scriptures read in the Church and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Together, we believe in the Church, baptism, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal life.” (Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior, n. 43). I am convinced that by returning to the Council of Nicaea and drawing together from this common source, we will be able to see in a different light the points that still separate us. Through theological dialogue and with the help of God, we will gain a better understanding of the mystery that unites us. By celebrating together this Nicene faith and by proclaiming it together, we will also advance towards the restoration of full communion among us.

The second theme of your Symposium is synodality. The Council of Nicaea inaugurated a synodal path for the Church to follow in dealing with theological and canonical questions at the universal level. The contribution of fraternal delegates from the Churches and ecclesial communities of East and West to the recent Synod on Synodality held here in the Vatican was a valuable stimulus to greater reflection on the nature and practice of synodality. The Synod’s Final Document noted that “ecumenical dialogue is fundamental for developing our understanding of synodality and the unity of the Church” and it went on to encourage the development of “ecumenical synodal practices, including forms of consultation and discernment on questions of shared and urgent interest” (For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, Mission, n. 138). It is my hope that the preparation and joint commemoration of the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea will be a providential occasion “to deepen and confess together our faith in Christ and to put into practice forms of synodality among Christians of all traditions” (cf. *ibid.*, n. 139).

The Symposium has a third theme related to the date of Easter. As we know, one of the objectives of the Council of Nicaea was to establish a common date for Easter in order to express the unity of the Church throughout the *oikoumene*. Sadly, differences in their calendars no longer allow Christians to celebrate together the most important feast of the liturgical year, causing pastoral problems within communities, dividing families and weakening the credibility of our witness to the Gospel. Several concrete solutions have been proposed that, while respecting the principle of Nicaea, would allow Christians to celebrate together the

“Feast of Feasts”. In this year, when all Christians have celebrated Easter on the same day, I would reaffirm the openness of the Catholic Church to the pursuit of an ecumenical solution favouring a common celebration of the Lord’s resurrection and thus giving greater missionary force to our preaching of “the name of Jesus and the salvation born of faith in the saving truth of the Gospel” (Address to Pontifical Mission Societies, 22 May 2025).

Brothers and sisters, on this eve of Pentecost, let us remember that the unity for which Christians long will not be primarily the fruit of our own efforts, nor will it be realized through any preconceived model or blueprint. Rather, unity will be a gift received “as Christ wills and by the means that he wills” (Prayer for Unity of Father Paul Couturier), by the working of the Holy Spirit. And so, at this time, I would invite you all to stand so we can pray together to implore the Spirit’s gift of unity. The prayer which I will recite implores the Spirit’s unity in a prayer which is drawn from the Eastern tradition:

“O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth,  
Who art everywhere and fillest all things;  
Treasury of Blessings, and Giver of Life,  
Come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity,  
and save our souls, O Good One.” Amen.

The Lord be with you. The blessing of Almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit come upon you and remain with you forever. Amen. Thank you very much.

**64. ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER  
TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE JUBILEE  
AND THE MEETING OF PONTIFICAL REPRESENTATIVES  
Clementine Hall  
Tuesday, 10 June 2025**

Your Eminences, Your Excellencies, Monsignori,

A special greeting to all of you, dear Pontifical Representatives. Before sharing the words I have prepared, I would just like to say to His Eminence and to all of you that what the Cardinal mentioned, I said not at the suggestion of anyone, but because I deeply believe it: your role, your ministry, is irreplaceable. The Church would be unable to give many things

if it were not for the sacrifice, the work and everything that you do in order to enable such an important dimension of the great mission of the Church to proceed, and precisely in the case of which I spoke, namely the selection of candidates to the episcopate. Thank you from the heart for what you do! Now, please have a little patience.

After yesterday morning's celebration for the Jubilee of the Holy See, I am pleased to be able to stay briefly with you, the Pope's representatives to States and international organizations throughout the world.

First of all, thank you for coming, for undertaking a journey that for many of you was long. Thank you! You are already, as people, an image of the Catholic Church, since a diplomatic Corps as universal as ours does not exist in any other country in the world. However, at the same time, I believe that one may equally say that no other country in the world has a diplomatic Corps as united as you are: because your, our, communion is not merely functional, nor an idea; we are united in Christ and we are united in the Church. It is interesting to reflect on this fact: that the diplomacy of the Holy See constitutes in its very staff a model – certainly not perfect, but very meaningful – of the message it proposes: that of human fraternity and peace among all peoples.

Dear friends, I am taking my first steps in this ministry that the Lord has entrusted to me. And I also feel towards you what I confided some days ago, when speaking to the Secretariat of State: namely, my gratitude towards those who are helping me to carry out my service day by day. This gratitude is even greater when I think – and directly touch upon as I address various topics – that you work very often goes before me! Yes, and this applies in a particular way to you, because when a situation is presented to me that relates, for example, to the Church in a given country, I can rely on the documentation, reflections and summaries prepared by you and your collaborators. The network of Pontifical Representations is always active and operative. This is for me a cause for great appreciation and gratitude. I say this thinking certainly of the dedication and organization, but, even more so, of the motivations that guide you, the pastoral style that should characterize you, the spirit of faith that inspires us. Thanks to these qualities, I too will be able to experience what Saint Paul VI wrote; that through his Representatives, who reside in various nations, the Pope is able to participate in the very life of his sons and, almost by becoming part of it, becomes aware, in a surer and more rapid way, their needs and at the same time their aspirations (cf. Apostolic Letter issued *Motu Proprio Sollicitudo omnium*

Ecclesarium, Introduction).

And now I would like to share with you a biblical image that came to mind when thinking of your mission in relation to mine. At the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles (3:1-10), the story of the healing of the cripple describes the ministry of Peter well. We are at the dawn of Christian experience, and the first community, gathered around the Apostles, knows it can count on a single reality: the risen and living Jesus. A crippled man sits begging at the door of the Temple. It appears to be the image of a humanity that has lost hope and is resigned. Even today, the Church often encounters men and women who no longer have any joy, whom society has sidelined, or whom life has in a certain sense forced into begging for their existence. This page of the Acts relates: “Peter looked intently at him, as did John, and said ‘Look at us’. He paid attention to them, expecting to receive something from them. Peter said, ‘I have neither silver nor gold, but what I do have I give you in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean, [rise and] walk’. Then Peter took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles grew strong. He leaped up, stood and walked around, and went into the temple with them, walking and jumping and praising God” (3:4-8).

The request Peter makes to this man – “Look at us” – makes us think. To look into one’s eyes means to build a relationship. The ministry of Peter is to create relationships, bridges: and a Representative of the Pope, first and foremost, serves this invitation to look into the eyes. Always be the eyes of Peter! Be men capable of building relationships where it is hardest to do. But in doing so, preserve the same humility and the same realism of Peter, who is well aware that he does not have the solution to everything: “I have neither silver nor gold”, he says; but he knows he has what counts, namely Christ, the deepest meaning of every existence: “in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean, walk!”.

To give Christ means to give love, to bear witness to the charity that is ready for everything. I am counting on you so that in the countries where you live, everyone may know that the Church is always ready for everything out of love, that she is always on the side of the last, the poor, and that she will always defend the sacrosanct right to believe in God, to believe that this life is not at the mercy of the powers of this world, but rather is traversed by a mysterious meaning. Only love is worthy of faith, in the face of the suffering of the innocent, the crucified of today, whom many of you know personally, as you serve peoples who are victims of war, violence, and injustice, or even of the false wellbeing that deludes

and disappoints.

Dear brothers, may you always be consoled by the fact that your service is sub umbra Petri, as you will find engraved on the ring that you will receive as a gift from me. Always feel you are bound to Peter, protected by Peter, sent by Peter. Only in obedience and in effective communion with the Pope may your ministry be effective for the edification of the Church, in communion with the local bishops.

Always have a blessing gaze, because the ministry of Peter is to bless, that is, always to know how to see the good, even that which is hidden, which is in the minority. Feel that you are missionaries, sent by the Pope to be tools of communion, unity, serving the dignity of the human person, promoting sincere and constructive relations everywhere with the authorities with whom you are required to cooperate. May your competence always be enlightened by the sound decision for holiness. The Saints who were in the diplomatic service of the Holy See, such as Saint John XXIII and Saint Paul VI, provide an example to us.

Dear friends, your presence here today strengthens the awareness that the role of Peter is to confirm in faith. You are the first to need this confirmation in order to become its messengers, visible signs in every part of the world.

May the Holy Door we all passed through together yesterday spur us to be courageous witnesses of Christ, who is always our hope. Thank you.

**65. ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER  
TO THE CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF ROME  
Audience Hall  
Thursday, 12 June 2025**

I want to ask for a big round of applause for all of you who are here, and for all the priests and deacons of Rome!

Dear Priests and Deacons who provide your service in the diocese of Rome, dear seminarians, I greet you all with affection and friendship!

I thank His Eminence the Cardinal Vicar, for the words of greeting and for his presentation, telling something of your presence in this city.

I wished to meet you to get to know you personally, and to begin walking with you. I thank you for your life given in the service of the Kingdom, for your daily labours, for your great generosity in the exercise of your ministry, for everything you live in silence and that is at times accompanied by suffering or misunderstanding. You carry out different services, but you are all precious in the eyes of God and in the fulfilment of his plan.

The diocese of Rome presides in charity and in communion, and can fulfil this mission thanks to each one of you, in the bond of grace with the Bishop and in the fruitful co-responsibility of all God's people. Ours is a truly particular diocese, because many priests come from various parts of the world, especially in order to study; and this implies that pastoral care too – I am thinking above all of the parishes – is marked by this universality and the mutual acceptance it entails.

Starting precisely from this universal outlook that Rome offers, I would like to share cordially with you a few reflections.

The first note, that is particularly close to my heart, is that of unity and communion. In the so-called “priestly” prayer, as we know, Jesus asked the Father that his people may be one (cf. Jn 20-23). The Lord knows well that only by being joined to him and united among ourselves can we bear fruit and give credible witness to the world. Presbyteral communion here in Rome is favoured by the fact that, by ancient tradition, it is customary to live together, in rectories as well as in colleges or other residences.

The presbyter is called to be the man of communion, because he is the first to live it, and continually nurtures it. We know that this communion today is hindered by a cultural climate that favours isolation or self-absorption. None of us is exempt from these pitfalls that threaten the solidity of our spiritual life and the strength of our ministry.

But we must be vigilant because, in addition to the cultural context, communion and fraternity among us also encounter some obstacles that are, so to speak, “internal”, which relate to the ecclesial life of the diocese, interpersonal relationships, and also what resides in the heart, especially that feeling of weariness that arises because we have experienced particular hardships, because we do not feel we are understood

and heard, or for other reasons. I would like to help you, to walk with you, so that each person may regain serenity in his own ministry; but it is precisely for this reason that I ask you for zeal in priestly fraternity, which has its roots in a solid spiritual life, in the encounter with the Lord and in listening to his Word. Nourished by this lymph, we are able to have relationships of friendship, outdoing one another in respect (cf. Rm 12:10); we feel the need for others in order to grow and to foster the same ecclesial drive.

Communion should also be translated into commitment in this diocese: with diverse charisms, with different paths of formation and even with different services, but the effort to sustain it must be one. I ask all of you to pay attention to the pastoral journey of this Church which is local but, because of who leads it, is also universal. Walking together is always a guarantee of fidelity to the Gospel; together and in harmony, striving to enrich the Church with one's own charism but having at heart the single body of which Christ is the Head.

The second note I want to give you is that of exemplarity. On the occasion of the priestly ordinations on 31 May last, in the homily I recalled the importance of the transparency of life, on the basis of the words of Saint Paul who said to the elders of Ephesus: "You yourselves know how I lived among you" (Acts 20:18).

I ask you, with the heart of a father and of a pastor, let us all undertake to be credible and exemplary priests! We are aware of the limits of our nature and the Lord knows us in depth; but we have received an extraordinary grace; we have been entrusted with a precious treasure of which we are the ministers, the servants. And fidelity is required of the servant.

None of us is exempt from the suggestions of the world, and the city, with its thousands of offerings, could even draw us away from the desire for a holy life, inducing a levelling down in which the profound values of being a priest are lost. Let yourselves be drawn once again by the call of the Master, to feel and live the love of the first hour, that which drove you to make important choices and courageous sacrifices. If together we try to be exemplary in a humble life, then we will be able to express the renewing force of the Gospel for every man and for every woman.

A final note I wish to give you is that of looking at the challenges of our time from a prophetic perspective. We are concerned and sad-

dened by everything that happens every day in the world: we are hurt by the violence that generates death, we are challenged by inequalities, poverty, many forms of social marginalization, the widespread suffering that assumes the features of an unease that no longer spares anyone. And these are not distant realities, far from us, but rather they affect even our city of Rome, marked by multiple forms of poverty and grave emergencies such as the issue of housing.

A city in which, as Pope Francis remarked, the “great beauty” and charm of art must also be matched by “simple decorum and the normal functioning of places and situations in ordinary, everyday life. Because a city that is more liveable for its citizens is also more welcoming to everyone” (Homily for Vespers with Te Deum, 31 December 2023).

The Lord wanted us in this time filled with challenges that, at times, seem to exceed our strength. We are called to embrace these challenges, to interpret them evangelically, to experience them as opportunities to bear witness. Let us not flee from them! Pastoral commitment, like that of study, become for us a school to learn how to build the Kingdom of God in today’s complex and challenging history.

In recent times we have had the example of holy priests who have been able to combine a passion for history with the proclamation of the Gospel, such as Don Primo Mazzolari and Don Lorenzo Milani, prophets of peace and justice. And here in Rome we have had Don Luigi Di Liegro who, faced with so much poverty, devoted his life to seeking ways of justice and human advancement. Let us draw on the strength of these examples to continue sowing seeds of holiness in our city.

Dear friends, I assure you of my closeness, my affection and my readiness to walk with you. Let us entrust our priestly life to the Lord, and let us ask him to be able to grow in unity, exemplarity and in prophetic commitment to serve our time.

May we be accompanied by the heartfelt appeal of Saint Augustine, who said: “Love this Church, be ye in this holy Church, be ye this Church; love the Good Shepherd, the Spouse so fair, who deceiveth no one, who desireth no one to perish. Pray too for the scattered sheep; that they too may come, that they too may acknowledge Him, that they too may love Him; that there may be One Flock and One Shepherd” (Sermon 138, 10). Thank you.

**66. ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER  
TO THE BISHOPS OF MADAGASCAR  
Hall of Popes  
Monday, 16 June 2025**

BYour Eminence, Your Excellencies, dear brothers in the episcopate!

It is with great joy that I welcome you today at the tomb of the Apostle Peter, pastors of the Church in Madagascar, who have come to Rome on the Jubilee pilgrimage. This meeting has a particular significance for me, because it is our first meeting. I give thanks to the Lord for this occasion of fraternity in Christ.

I must also tell you that I admire your decision to come all together to Rome, as bishops of Madagascar. It is a good sign of unity, already agreed with beloved Pope Francis, whom we feel spiritually present also at this time. He visited your country in 2019, and three years later, he welcomed you on your *ad limina Apostolorum* visit. This time it is the Jubilee, the year of grace proclaimed by the Lord Jesus, that has brought you here.

And it is good that you have become pilgrims of hope, together with the thousands and thousands of faithful who cross the Holy Doors of the papal basilicas every day. You are first and foremost pilgrims of hope for yourselves: you, who are pastors, have remembered that first of all you are sheep in the flock, to whom Christ says: "I am the gate for the sheep. ... Whoever enters through me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture" (Jn 10:7-9). And at the same time, you have become pilgrims of hope for your people, for families, for the elderly, children, the young; so that the Churches in Madagascar, through you, may receive the grace to walk in the hope that is Jesus Christ.

I am pleased to listen to you tell of the joys and the pastoral trials you faithfully bear. Your closeness to the people of God is a living sign of the Gospel. I encourage each one of you, in your episcopal ministry, to take particular care of the priests, who are your first collaborators and your closest brothers, as well as the religious brothers and sisters who spend themselves in service.

I give thanks for the missionary vitality of your particular Churches, heirs to the witness of the saints who, to bring the Gospel to that distant land,

feared neither refusal nor persecution. I would like to remember Henri de Solages, the first missionary who did not let himself be discouraged by failure and imprisonment, or the martyr saint Jacques Berthieu, whose blood was the seed of Christianity in Madagascar. May your example continue to strengthen you in the giving of yourselves to Christ and to his Church, amid the successes and pastoral trials you go through in order to reach the people of God in the various realities of your dioceses!

I urge you not to take your eyes off the poor: they are at the centre of the Gospel and are the privileged recipients of the proclamation of the Good News. May you recognize in them the face of Christ, and may your pastoral action always be inspired by a concrete concern for the little ones. May your ministry in this Jubilee, beyond its trials, help them to ignite the ever-new horizons of the hope offered by Christ.

Following Pope Francis, I invite you to take care of our common home, to preserve the beauty of the Great Island, whose beauty and fragility have been entrusted to you. Care for our home is an integral part of your prophetic mission. Take care of creation, which weeps, and teach your faithful the art of protecting it with justice and peace.

Dear brothers, continue your service with courage and hope. The Successor of Peter accompanies you with his prayer and his affection. May the Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Madagascar, protect you. May Blessed Raphaël Rafiringa, Blessed Victoire Rasoamanarivo, Saint Jacques Berthieu and all the saints of your land intercede for you. I bless you from my heart.

**67. ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER  
TO THE ITALIAN EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE  
Hall of Benediction  
Tuesday, 17 June 2025**

Dear brothers and sisters,

I am truly very pleased to meet you. This Hall, which is between the Basilica and the Square, is filled with the emotions that accompanied recent events. Indeed, the Pope must cross it in order to look out from the central Loggia. Beloved Pope Francis did so for his last Easter *Urbi et Orbi* Message, which was his extreme, intense appeal for peace for all peoples. And I too, on the evening of the election, wanted to echo the

announcement of the Risen Lord: “Peace be with you!” (cf. Lk 24:3; Jn 20:19).

I thank you for your prayer and for that of your communities: I am in great need of them! I am grateful, in particular, to Cardinal Zuppi, also for the words he addressed to me. I greet the three Vice Presidents, the Secretary General, and every one of you. The history of the Church in Italy shows the particular bond that unites you to the Pope and that – according to the Statutes of the Italian Episcopal Conference – “qualifies in a special way the communion of the Conference with the Roman Pontiff” (Art. 4 § 2). Following the example of my predecessors, I too am aware of the relevance of this “common and particular” relationship, as it was defined by Saint Paul VI, speaking at the first General Assembly of the Italian Episcopal Conference (cf. Address, 23 June 1966).

In exercising my ministry together with you, dear brothers, I would like to be inspired by the principles of collegiality, which were elaborated by Vatican Council II; in particular, the Decree *Christus Dominus*, which emphasizes that the Lord Jesus constituted the Apostles in the manner of a college or stable class, of which he placed Peter, chosen from among them (cf. n. 19). It is in this way that you are called to live out your ministry: collegiality among yourselves and collegiality with the successor of Peter.

This principle of communion is also reflected in a healthy cooperation with the civil authorities. The Italian Episcopal Conference is indeed a space for discussion and the synthesis of the bishops’ thought regarding issues most relevant for the common good. Where necessary, it guides and coordinates the relations between the individual bishops and the regional episcopal Conferences with such authorities at the local level.

Pope Benedict XVI, in 2006, described the Church in Italy as “a lively reality ... which conserves a capillary presence in the midst of people of every age and level” and where “Christian traditions often continue to be rooted and to produce fruit” (Address to participants in the Fourth National Ecclesial Convention, 19 October 2006). Nevertheless, the Christian Community in this country has been facing new challenges for some time, linked to secularism, a certain disaffection with the faith, and the demographic crisis. In this context, Pope Francis observed, “It takes boldness to avoid getting used to situations that are so deeply rooted as to seem normal or insurmountable. Prophecy”, he says, “does

not exact wrenches but courageous choices, proper for a true ecclesial community: they lead us to allow ourselves to be 'troubled' by events and persons and to enter into human situations, animated by the healing spirit of the Beatitudes" (Address at the opening of the 70th General Assembly of the Italian Episcopal Conference, 22 May 2017).

By virtue of the special bond between the Pope and the Italian bishops, I would like to indicate some pastoral concerns that the Lord places in our path and which require reflection, concrete action and evangelical witness.

First of all, there is a need for renewed zeal in the proclamation and transmission of faith. It is a question of placing Jesus Christ at the centre and, following the path indicated by *Evangelii gaudium*, helping people to live out a personal relationship with Him, to discover the joy of the Gospel. In a time of great fragmentation, it is necessary to return to the foundation of our faith, to the kerygma. This is the first major commitment that motivates all the others: to bring Christ "into the veins" of humanity (cf. Apostolic Constitution *Humanae salutis*, 3), renewing and sharing the apostolic mission: "What we have seen and heard, we proclaim now to you" (1 Jn 1:3). And it is a question of discerning the ways in which the Good News can be made to reach everyone, with pastoral actions capable of intercepting those who are most distant, and with tools suitable for the renewal of catechesis and the languages of proclamation.

The relationship with Christ calls on us to develop a pastoral focus on the theme of peace. Indeed, the Lord sends us into the world to bring his same gift: "Peace be with you!", and to become its creators in everyday life. I am thinking of parishes, neighbourhoods, areas within the country, the urban and existential peripheries. There, where human and social relationships become difficult and conflict takes shape, perhaps subtly, a Church capable of reconciliation must make herself visible. The apostle Paul urges us, "If possible, on your part, live at peace with all" (Rm 12:18); it is an invitation that entrusts a tangible portion of responsibility to every person. I hope, then, that every diocese may promote pathways of education in non-violence, mediation initiatives in local conflicts, and welcoming projects that transform fear of the other into an opportunity for encounter. May every community become a "house of peace", where one learns how to defuse hostility through dialogue, where justice is practiced and forgiveness is cherished. Peace is not a spiritual utopia: it is a humble path, made up of daily gestures that interweave patience and courage, listening and action, and which demands today, more

than ever, our vigilant and generative presence.

Then there are the challenges that call into question respect for the dignity of the human person. Artificial intelligence, biotechnologies, data economy and social media are profoundly transforming our perception and our experience of life. In this scenario, human dignity risks becoming diminished or forgotten, substituted by functions, automatism, simulations. But the person is not a system of algorithms: he or she is a creature, relationship, mystery. Allow me, then, to express a wish: that the journey of the Churches in Italy may include, in real symbiosis with the centrality of Jesus, the anthropological vision as an essential tool of pastoral discernment. Without lively reflection on the human being – in its corporeality, its vulnerability, its thirst for the infinite and capacity for bonding – ethics is reduced to a code and faith risks becoming disembodied.

I particularly recommend cultivating a culture of dialogue. It is good for all ecclesial realities - parishes, associations and movements - to be spaces of intergenerational listening, of comparison with different worlds, of caring about words and relationships. Because only where there is listening can communion be born, and only where there is communion does truth become credible. I encourage you to continue on this path!

The proclamation of the Gospel, peace, human dignity, dialogue: these are the coordinates through which you can be a Church that incarnates the Gospel and is a sign of the Kingdom of God.

In conclusion, I would like to leave you with some exhortations for the near future. In the first place: go forward in unity, thinking especially of the synodal path. The Lord, Saint Augustine writes that the Lord, in order to keep his body well-composed and in peace, exhorts the Church, through the Apostle Paul: The eye cannot say to the hand, I do not need you, nor again the head to the feet, I do not need you. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? Stay united and do not defend yourselves against the provocations of the Spirit. Synodality becomes a mindset, in the heart, in decision-making processes and in ways of acting.

Secondly, look to tomorrow with serenity, and do not be afraid to make courageous choices! No-one can prevent you from being close to the people, sharing life, walking with the last, serving the poor. No-one can

prevent you from proclaiming the Gospel, and it is the Gospel that we are invited to bring, because it is this that everyone, ourselves first, need in order to live well and to be happy.

Take care that the lay faithful, nourished with the Word of God and formed in the social doctrine of the Church, are agents of evangelization in the workplace, in schools, in hospitals, in social and cultural environments, in the economy, and in politics.

Dear friends, let us walk together, with joy in our heart and song on our lips. God is greater than our mediocrity: let us allow ourselves to be drawn to Him! Let us trust in his providence. I entrust you all to the protection of Mary Most Holy: Our Lady of Loreto, of Pompeii and of the countless shrines to be found throughout Italy. And I accompany you with my blessing. Thank you.

**68. ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV  
TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE EVENT PROMOTED BY  
THE CARDINAL DOMENICO BARTOLUCCI FOUNDATION**

**Sala Regia**

**Wednesday, 18 June 2025**

Dear brothers and sisters, welcome!

I greet His Eminence Cardinal Dominique Mamberti, Sr. Raffaella Petrini, the esteemed speakers and the distinguished guests. I joyfully participate in this meeting in which, with words and in music, we celebrate the new Philatelic Collection promoted by the Bartolucci Foundation and issued by the Vatican Post on the occasion of the five-hundredth anniversary of the birth of Palestrina.

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina was, in the history of the Church, one of the composers who has contributed the most to the promotion of sacred music, for “the glory of God and the sanctification and edification of the faithful” (Saint Pius X, *Motu proprio Inter plurimas pastoralis officii sollicitudines*, 22 November 1903, 1), in the delicate, yet at the same time exciting, context of the Counter-Reformation.

His compositions, solemn and austere, inspired by Gregorian chant, closely unite music and liturgy, “whether [they] add delight to prayer, foster unity of minds, or confer greater solemnity upon the sacred rites”

(Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Constitution Sacrosanctum Concilium, 112).

Moreover, polyphony itself is a musical form rich in meaning, for prayer and for Christian life. Indeed, first of all it is inspired by the sacred Text, which proposes to “clothe with a fitting melody” (Inter sollicitudines, 1) so that it may better reach “the intelligence of the faithful” (ibid.). Moreover, it achieves this purpose by entrusting the words to several voices, each repeating them in its own original way, with varied and complementary melodic and harmonious movements. Finally, it harmonizes the whole thanks to the skill with which the composer develops and intertwines the melodies, respecting the rules of counterpoint, making them echo one another, sometimes even creating dissonances, which are then resolved in new chords. The effect of this dynamic unity in diversity - a metaphor for our common journey of faith under the guidance of the Holy Spirit - is to help the listener enter ever more deeply into the mystery expressed by the words, responding, where appropriate, with responses or in alternatim.

Thanks precisely to this richness of form and content, the Roman polyphonic tradition, besides leaving us an immense heritage of art and spirituality, continues even today, in the sphere of music, to be a point of reference to look to, albeit with due adaptations, in sacred and liturgical composition, so that through song, “all the faithful should be led to that fully conscious and active participation in liturgical celebrations” (Sacrosanctum Concilium, 14), with the profound involvement of voice, mind and heart. Of all this the Missa Papae Marcelli, in its genre, is a quintessential example, as is the precious repertoire of compositions left to us by the unforgettable Cardinal Domenico Bartolucci, illustrious composer and for almost fifty years the director of the Pontifical Sistine Chapel Choir.

I therefore thank all those who have made this meeting possible: the Bartolucci Foundation, the speakers, the choirs and all of you. I will remember you in my prayer. Saint Augustine, speaking of the chant of the Easter Alleluia, said: “So now, my dear brothers and sisters, let us sing. ... In the way travellers are in the habit of singing; sing, but keep on walking. ... Make some progress, make progress in goodness. ... Sing, and keep on walking. Don't stray off the road, don't go back, don't stay where you are” (Sermon 256, 3). Let us embrace his invitation, especially in this holy time of the Jubilee. To all of you, my blessing.

**69. ADDRESS OF POPE LEO XIV  
TO PRIESTS OF THE PONTIFICAL ECCLESIASTICAL  
ACADEMY RETURNING AFTER A YEAR DOING MISSIONARY WORK  
Apostolic Palace  
Friday, 20 June 2025**

I am pleased to meet you today, and to address my cordial greeting to every one of you. I welcome your President, Archbishop Salvatore Pennacchio, your Prefect of Studies, Msgr. Gabriel Viola, and you, dearest Priests, who have just returned from your experience of the Missionary Year, the culmination of your formation at the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy.

Last week, meeting your companions of the Alma mater of the pontifical diplomats, I had the opportunity to reiterate the value of this formative insight, introduced by my venerable Predecessor.

I urged them to be and to remain “pastors with your feet on the ground”, to embody that figure of the priest in the service of the Pope in the pontifical Representations, clearly outlined in the Chirograph The Petrine Ministry, with which it was intended to give new impetus to your centuries-old institution, as it approaches the celebration of the 325th anniversary of its founding.

As I affirmed in various meetings in the context of the recent Jubilee of the Holy See, the guardianship of that care for all the Churches – proper to the ministry entrusted to me – needs the faithful and irreplaceable service of the Secretariat of State and of the Pontifical Representations, which whom you will soon begin to collaborate.

Therefore, I urge you too to exercise the gift of your priesthood with humility and meekness, the capacity for listening and proximity, as faithful and tireless disciples of Christ the Good Shepherd. Whatever the tasks entrusted to you may be, in whatever part of the world you may find yourselves, the Pope must be able to count on priests who, in prayer as in work, do not spare themselves in bringing his closeness to the peoples and to the Churches with their witness.

I thank you again for the docility and self-sacrifice with which you have spent the past year in the most diverse contexts, and I warmly bless the start of your ministry in the diplomatic service of the Holy See.

**70. ADDRESS OF POPE LEO XIV  
TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE GENERAL CHAPTERS OF THE  
CONVENTUAL FRANCISCANS AND OF THE ORDER OF THE MOST  
HOLY TRINITY AND OF THE CAPTIVES (TRINITARIANS)  
Clementine Hall  
Friday, 20 June 2025**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Peace be with you!

Welcome, dear brothers and sisters! I greet in particular the Superiors General – both were confirmed – the Counsellors and the Capitulars of the Order of Friars Minor Conventual and those of the Order of the Most Holy Trinity and of Captives, as well as the delegates of the Third Order and of the lay groups.

In order to be able to welcome Franciscans and Trinitarians together, I recalled a painting located in the apse of the Basilica of Saint John Lateran, which depicts an audience of which this could be a fine re-evocation. Indeed, the image shows Pope Innocent III receiving Saint Francis and Saint Juan de Mata together, to honour their great contribution to the reform of religious life.

It is interesting to note that Saint Francis is depicted kneeling with an enormous open book, almost as if he were about to say to the Pontiff: “Your Holiness, I ask only to live the rule of the Holy Gospel sine glossa” (cf. Text 14-15). Saint Juan de Mata, instead, is standing and holds in his hand the Rule that he has drawn up together with the Pontiff. Whereas Saint Francis demonstrates his docility to the Church, presenting his project not as his own but as a divine gift, Saint Juan de Mata shows the approved text, after study and discernment, as the culmination of a task that was absolutely necessary to accomplish the purpose that God has inspired. The two attitudes, far from being opposed to one another, would have enlightened each other and been a guideline for the service that the Holy See has provided to all charisms ever since.

God inspired in these two Saints not only a spiritual path of service, but also the desire to speak with the Successor of Peter about the gift received by the Spirit, so as to make it available to the Church. Saint Francis expounded to the Pope the need to follow Jesus without reserve, without other ends, without ambiguousness or artifice. Saint

Juan de Mata expressed this truth with words that would then prove to be fundamental, and which Saint Francis would make his own. A good example would be that of living “without anything of one’s own”, without anything “hidden in the chamber of the pocket or the heart”, as Pope Francis emphasized (cf. Address to the Canonesses of the Order of the Holy Spirit, 5 December 2024). Another of these terms expresses the need for such devotion to be transformed into service, that the superior is perceived as a ministry, that is, he who makes himself the smallest in order to be a servant to all. It is interesting to note how Saint Matthew’s verse (cf. 20:27) has influenced the vocabulary of religious life as a whole, because calling a prior, master, magister or minister shapes the entire concept of authority as service.

To make this gift current, you Trinitarians wanted to focus on the purpose of your Institute: to bring consolation to those who cannot live the faith in freedom. During these months you have prayed this intention, following the words of Saint Paul: “Persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed” (2 Cor 4:9), which inspire the motto of your Chapter. I join in this prayer, and I also ask God the Trinity that this may be one of the fruits of your assembly: that you may not cease to remember in your prayer and in your daily efforts those who are persecuted due to their faith. That part, the third part - concerning the persecuted - is, according to the teaching of Saint Augustine, the part of God and that which marks the vocation of the liberator of his people (cf. Questions on the Heptateuch, Bk. II, 15). Moreover, this attention towards the most suffering members of the Church will attract the attention of vocations, the faithful and people of good will to this reality and will keep you available for the frontier services you carry out in the Arabian Peninsula, the Middle East, Africa and the Indian subcontinent.

Another essential element of your purpose, Friars Minor Conventual, in this Chapter, was to carry out discernment on the regulations of the General and Provincial Chapters, because in these, “one speaks about matters of God”. It is not our personal interest that should move us, but that of Christ; it is his Spirit that we must listen to, first and foremost, in order to “write the future in the present”, as the motto of your Chapter says. Listen to him in the voice of your brother, in the discernment of your community, in attentiveness to the signs of the times, and in the appeals of the Magisterium. Dear sons of Saint Francis of Assisi, on the eight-hundredth anniversary of the composition of the Canticle of the Creatures, or Brother Sun, I urge each one of you personally, and in each of your fraternities, to be a living reminder of the primacy of the praise of

God in Christian life. Moreover, let me not forget that you Conventuals are also celebrating the anniversary of your renewed presence in the Far East.

Dear friends, I would like to conclude this meeting with the Praises of God Most High, the trisagion written by Saint Francis: “You are the holy Lord God who does wonderful things. You are strong. You are great. You are the Most High. You are the almighty King. You, holy Father, King of heaven and earth” (Franciscan Sources, 261).

Thank you to you all, and may God bless you!

**71. ADDRESS OF POPE LEO XIV  
TO MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL INTER-PARLIAMENTARY  
UNION  
Hall of Benediction  
Saturday, 21 June 2025**

Madam President of the Council of Ministers, and Mr President of the Chamber of Deputies of the Republic of Italy,  
Madam President and Mr Secretary General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,  
Distinguished Representatives of Academic Institutions and Religious Leaders,

I am pleased that we can meet in the context of the Conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, during the present Jubilee of Governments. I offer a warm greeting to the members of the Delegations coming from sixty-eight different countries, and, in a particular way, the Presidents of the respective Parliamentary Institutions.

Politics has rightly been defined as “the highest form of charity,” quoting Pope Pius XI (Address to the Italian Catholic University Federation, 18 December 1927). Indeed, if we consider the service that political life renders to society and to the common good, it can truly be seen as an act of Christian love, which is never simply a theory, but always a concrete sign and witness of God’s constant concern for the good of our human family (cf. Francis, Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti*, 176-192).

In this regard, I would like to share with you this morning three considerations that I deem important in the current cultural context.

The first concerns your responsibility to promote and protect, independent of any special interest, the good of the community, the common good, particularly by defending the vulnerable and the marginalized. This would mean, for example, working to overcome the unacceptable disproportion between the immense wealth concentrated in the hands of a few and the world's poor (cf. Leo XIII, Encyclical Letter *Rerum Novarum*, 15 May 1891, 1). Those who live in extreme conditions cry out to make their voices heard, and often find no ears willing to hear their plea. This imbalance generates situations of persistent injustice, which readily lead to violence and, sooner or later, to the tragedy of war. Sound politics, on the other hand, by promoting the equitable distribution of resources, can offer an effective service to harmony and peace both domestically and internationally.

My second reflection has to do with religious freedom and interreligious dialogue. This area has taken on greater significance in the present time, and political life can achieve much by encouraging the conditions for there to be authentic religious freedom and that a respectful and constructive encounter between different religious communities may develop. Belief in God, with the positive values that derive from it, is an immense source of goodness and truth for the lives of individuals and communities. Saint Augustine spoke of the need to pass from *amor sui* – egotistic, myopic and destructive self-love – to *amor Dei* – a free and generous love, grounded in God and leading to the gift of self. That passage, he taught, is essential for the building of the *civitas Dei*, a society whose fundamental law is charity (cf. *De Civitate Dei*, XIV, 28).

In order to have a shared point of reference in political activity, and not exclude a priori any consideration of the transcendent in decision-making processes, it would be helpful to seek an element that unites everyone. To this end, an essential reference point is the natural law, written not by human hands, but acknowledged as valid in all times and places, and finding its most plausible and convincing argument in nature itself. In the words of Cicero, already an authoritative exponent of this law in antiquity, I quote from *De Re Publica*: “Natural law is right reason, in accordance with nature, universal, constant and eternal, which with its commands, invites us to do what is right and with its prohibitions deters us from evil... No change may be made to this law, nor may any part of it be removed, nor can it be abolished altogether; neither by the Senate nor by the people, can we free ourselves from it, nor is it necessary to seek its commentator or interpreter. And there shall be no law in Rome,

none in Athens, none now, none later; but one eternal and unchanging law shall govern all peoples at all times” (III, 22).

Natural law, which is universally valid apart from and above other more debatable beliefs, constitutes the compass by which to take our bearings in legislating and acting, particularly on the delicate and pressing ethical issues that, today more than in the past, regard personal life and privacy.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, approved and proclaimed by the United Nations on 10 December 1948, is now part of humanity’s cultural heritage. That text, which is always relevant, can contribute greatly to placing the human person, in his or her inviolable integrity, at the foundation of the quest for truth, thus restoring dignity to those who do not feel respected in their inmost being and in the dictates of their conscience.

This brings us to a third consideration. The degree of civilization attained in our world and the goals you are charged to achieve are now facing a major challenge in the form of artificial intelligence. This is a development that will certainly be of great help to society, provided that its employment does not undermine the identity and dignity of the human person and his or her fundamental freedoms. In particular, it must not be forgotten that artificial intelligence functions as a tool for the good of human beings, not to diminish them, not to replace them. What is emerging is in fact a significant challenge, one that calls for great attention and foresight in order to project, also in the context of new scenarios, healthy, fair and sound lifestyles, especially for the good of younger generations.

Our personal life has greater value than any algorithm, and social relationships require spaces for development that far transcend the limited patterns that any soulless machine can pre-package. Let us not forget that, while able to store millions of data points and answer many questions in a matter of seconds, artificial intelligence remains equipped with a “static memory” that is in no way comparable to that of human beings. Our memory, on the other hand, is creative, dynamic, generative, capable of uniting past, present and future in a lively and fruitful search for meaning, with all the ethical and existential implications that this entails (cf. Francis, Address to the G7 Session on Artificial Intelligence, 14 June 2024).

Politics cannot ignore a challenge of this magnitude. On the contrary, it is called to respond to many citizens who rightly look with both confidence and concern at the issues raised by this new digital culture.

During the Jubilee of the Year 2000, Saint John Paul II indicated Saint Thomas More as a witness for political leaders to revere and an intercessor under whose protection to place their work. Sir Thomas More was a man faithful to his civic responsibilities, a perfect servant of the state precisely because of his faith, which led him to view politics not as a profession but as a mission for the spread of truth and goodness. He “placed his public activity at the service of the person, especially the weak and poor; he handled social disputes with an exquisite sense of justice; he protected the family and defended it with strenuous commitment; and he promoted the integral education of youth” (Apostolic Letter *E Sancti Thomae Mori*, 31 October 2000, 4). The courage he showed by his readiness to sacrifice his life rather than betray the truth makes him, also for us today, a martyr for freedom and for the primacy of conscience. May his example be a source of inspiration and guidance for each of you!

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, I thank you for your visit. I offer my prayerful good wishes for your work and upon you and your loved ones, I invoke God’s abundant blessings.

Thank you to all of you. God’s blessings upon you and your work. Thank you.

**72. JUBILEE OF SEMINARIANS**  
**MEDITATION OF POPE LEO XIV**  
**Altar of the Confessio in Saint Peter’s Basilica**  
**Tuesday, 24 June 2025**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
Peace be with you!

Good morning to everyone: Your Eminences, Your Excellencies, dear formators and above all, the seminarians present.

I am very happy to be with you, and I thank all of you, seminarians and formators alike, for your warm reception. Thank you especially for your joy and your enthusiasm. Thank you too, because with your energy you

feed the flame of hope in the life of the Church!

Today, you are not only pilgrims, but also witnesses of hope. You are witnesses to me and to everyone, because you wish to share in the exciting adventure of priesthood in these challenging times. You have accepted the Lord's call to become gentle and strong preachers of his saving word and servants of a Church that is open and pressing ahead with missionary zeal.

[Let me say a word in Spanish. Thank you for having accepted the Lord's invitation with courage, an invitation to follow him, to be a disciple, and to enter the seminary. Be strong and unafraid!]

You are saying "yes" to Christ's call, and doing so with humility and courage. Your "yes" to Christ is maturing within the life of the Church, as you allow yourselves to be guided on the necessary path of discernment and formation.

Jesus, as you know, calls you, before all else, to have an experience of friendship with him and with your other companions on the journey (cf. Mk 3:13). An experience that will continue to grow, also after ordination, and affect every part of your life. Indeed, nothing of your personal uniqueness should be put aside; rather, everything should be taken up and transformed, like the grain of wheat in the Gospel. The goal is to become a joyful man and a joyful priest, a "bridge", not an obstacle for those who come to you in order to come to Christ. He must increase and we must decrease. In that way, we can be shepherds after his own Heart. [1]

Speaking of the Heart of Jesus Christ, how can we not be reminded of the Encyclical *Dilexit Nos* of our late beloved Pope Francis? [2] Precisely at this time in your lives, in this season of formation and discernment, it is important to attend to your own hearts, the core of your being and the "engine" that drives your journey through life. Seminaries are meant to be training grounds in this regard. Especially nowadays, in societies and cultural contexts marked by conflict and narcissism, we need to learn how to love and how to do so as Jesus did. [3]

Just as Jesus loved with a human heart, [4] so you are called to love with the Heart of Christ! [in Spanish: To love with the heart of Jesus!] To learn this art, however, you need to work on your interior life. That is the place where God makes his voice heard, and where the deepest decisions

of our lives take shape. It is also the place where you will encounter the tensions and struggles ( Mk 7:14-23) that summon you to conversion, so that your entire life can breathe the fragrance of the Gospel. Your first job, then, is to work on your interior life. Keep in mind Saint Augustine's constant invitation to return to the heart, because it is there that we will find God. Sometimes descending to the depths of our heart can be intimidating, since we also have to confront our hurts, our wounds. Yet do not be afraid to face them, also with the help of others, because those wounds will make you sympathetic and compassionate towards others who suffer. Without an interior life, no real spiritual life is possible, because it is in the heart that God speaks to us.

God speaks in the heart, and we have to learn how to hear his voice. Part of this process is learning how to read the movements of the heart: not only the instant and fleeting emotions typical of youth, but also and above all the feelings that will help you discover the right direction in life. If you learn to know your heart, you will be more genuine and not feel the need to hide behind masks. The royal road that leads to a rich interior life is prayer. In an age of "hyper-connectivity," it is harder and harder to experience silence and solitude. Yet unless we encounter God, we will never really be able to know ourselves.

I would ask you to pray often to the Holy Spirit, so that he can mold within you a docile heart, capable of embracing the presence of God, also by listening to the voice of nature, of art, poetry, literature, [5] music, as well the human sciences. [6] In your disciplined study of theology, listen with an open mind and heart to the voices rising up from our culture, as, for example, the recent challenges posed by artificial intelligence and social media. [7] Above all, do as Jesus did. Learn to hear the often silent cry of the little ones, of the poor and the oppressed, and so many others, especially the young, who are searching for meaning in their life.

If you cultivate your heart through daily periods of silence, meditation, and prayer, you will learn the art of discernment. This, too, is important: learning discernment. When we are young, we overflow with desires, dreams and ambitions. Our hearts can often be overwhelmed and bewildered. On the other hand, if we follow the example of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we will surely learn to keep all those things in our heart and meditate on them. Saint Luke tells us that Mary could *synballein* ( Lk 2:19, 51), "hold together", all these things in her heart. [8] Avoid superficiality and hold the pieces of your life together through prayer and meditation. Ask yourself, what is my life experience teaching me? What does it tell

me about the direction my life is taking? Where is the Lord leading me?

Dear friends, have a meek and humble heart like that of Jesus (cf. Mt 11:29). As the apostle Paul urges (Phil 2:5ff), put on the mind of Christ and grow in human maturity, especially emotional and interpersonal maturity. It is important, and indeed necessary, that beginning with your time in the seminary, you strive for growth in human maturity, eliminating all forms of dissimulation and hypocrisy. Keep your gaze fixed on Jesus. You need to learn, too, how to acknowledge and express your emotions of sadness, fear, anxiety and indignation, and to bring these to your relationship with the Lord. Crises, limitations and weakness are not something to be concealed; they are in fact occasions of grace, which can lead you to a deeper share in the paschal mystery.

In a world so often marked by ingratitude and the thirst for power, where a throwaway culture seems to abound, you are called to be witnesses of gratitude to Christ for his abundant grace, as well as the joy, the tenderness and the mercy of his Heart. To learn how to approach and accept others, and to be generous and disinterested in your ministry. Allow the Holy Spirit to “anoint” your human qualities even prior to the anointing you will receive at your ordination.

The Heart of Christ is compelled by immense compassion. He is the Good Samaritan of all humanity, who tells us: “Go and do likewise” (Lk 10:37). This compassion drove him to break the bread of the word for the crowds and to teach them the meaning of sharing (cf. Mk 6:30-44). In this way, he gave us a glimpse of what he was later to do in the Upper Room and on the Cross, as he gave us his very self as food. To us, as to the disciples, he says: “Give them something to eat” (Mk 6:37). In a word, make your entire life a gift of love.

Dear seminarians, in her wisdom, Mother Church, with the help of the Holy Spirit, has always sought the most fitting ways to train her ordained ministers, keeping in mind the needs of different places. What is your own responsibility in this? Certainly, not to be content with the minimum, or to settle for being passive recipients of formation. Instead, you are called to be passionate about your preparation for priestly life, living fully in the present and looking to the future with a prophetic heart. I hope that this meeting will help each of you to deepen your personal dialogue with the Lord and to ask him to help you put on ever more fully the mind of Christ and the sentiments of his Heart. That Heart beats with love for you and all humanity. Keep pressing forward! I accompany

you on your journey and I now give you my blessing.

**73. ADDRESS OF POPE LEO XIV  
TO THE SEMINARIANS OF THE DIOCESES OF TRIVENETO  
Largo Giovanni Paolo II  
Wednesday, 25 June 2025**

Good morning, good morning!

In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Peace be with you!

Dear brothers in the Episcopate,  
dear formators and seminarians of the diocese of Triveneto,

I am pleased to be able to meet you on the occasion of the Jubilee pilgrimage. I think that everyone was present yesterday too, so this is the second opportunity. Your land has deep Christian roots, which lead us back to the ancient Church of Aquileia. In this spiritual memory of faith, the witness of many martyrs and pastor saints shines. Let us remember the bishop Chromatius; let us remember Jerome and Rufinus, exemplary in study and in ascetic life; as well as the blessed Tullio Maruzzo and Giovanni Schiavo, missionaries who spread the Gospel in many peoples, languages and cultures.

Today it is up to us to continue this exciting work. In particular, you seminarians are called to be part of this rich history of grace, to conserve it and renew it in following the Lord. Do not be discouraged if at times the journey ahead of you becomes hard. As Blessed John Paul I said to the clergy of Rome, train yourselves in the discipline of a “continued, long, and difficult effort. Even the angels that Jacob saw in a dream were not flying, but climbing one step at a time; you can just imagine us, poor men without wings” (Address to the Roman clergy, 7 September 1978). Thus spoke a Pastor in whom the best virtues of your people shone: in him you have a true model of priestly life.

I would also like to recall a passage from the conversion of Saint Augustine, as he himself relates it to us in his Confessions. On the one hand he was eager to decide for Christ; on the other, he was held back by scruples and temptations. Profoundly troubled, one day he retreated to reflect in the garden at home; and the personification of the virtue of Continence

appeared to him, saying: “Why do you stand in your own strength, and so standest not? Cast yourself upon Him; fear not, He will not withdraw that you should fall; cast yourself upon Him without fear, He will receive you, and heal you” (Confessions, VIII, 27).

As a father, I repeat these same words to you, which were so good for Augustine’s restless heart: they do not apply only with regard to celibacy, which is a charism to be acknowledged, conserved and educated, but can guide your entire journey of discernment and formation in ordained ministry. In particular, these words invite you to have boundless trust in the Lord, the Lord who called you, renouncing the pretence of being sufficient for yourselves or of being able to do it alone. And this applies not only to the seminary years, but to your whole life: at all times, all the more so in those of desolation or even sin, repeat to yourselves the words of the psalmist: “I trust in God’s mercy forever and ever” (Ps 52:10). The Word of God and the Sacraments are perennial sources from which you will always be able to draw new lymph for the spiritual life, and also for pastoral commitment.

Therefore, do not think of yourselves as alone, nor by yourselves. Without doubt – as the Ratio fundamentalis states – each one of you “is the protagonist of his own formation and is called to a journey of constant growth in the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral spheres” (Congregation for the Clergy, The gift of priestly formation, 130); but protagonists does not mean soloists! Therefore, I invite you always to cultivate communion, first of all with your seminary companions. Have complete trust in your formators, without reserve or duplicity. And you, formators, be good companions to the seminarians entrusted to you: offer them the humble witness of your life and your faith; accompany them with sincere affection. Know that you are all supported by the Church, first and foremost in the person of the Bishop.

Finally, the most important thing: keep your eyes fixed on Jesus (cf. Heb 12:2), cultivating the relationship of friendship with Him. In this regard, as the English priest Robert Hugh Benson (1871-1914) wrote after his conversion to Catholicism: “If there is anything clear in the Gospels it is this – that Jesus Christ first and foremost desires our friendship. ... Now the consciousness of this friendship of Jesus Christ is the very secret of the Saints” (The Friendship of Christ, Milan 2024, 17). He asks you, as Pope Francis wrote in the Encyclical Dilexit nos, “never to be ashamed to tell others, with all due discretion and respect, about your friendship with him. He asks that you dare to tell others how good and beautiful

it is that you found him” (no. 211). Indeed, encountering Jesus saves our life and gives us the strength and the joy to communicate the Gospel to everyone.

Dear friends, thank you for this visit. I wish you a good journey! May Our Lady always accompany you, and also my blessing. Thank you!

Have a good day! Thank you very much, and I wish you a good journey of faith!

**74. JUBILEE OF BISHOPS**  
**MEDITATION OF POPE LEO XIV**  
**Altar of the Cathedra in Saint Peter’s Basilica**  
**Wednesday, 25 June 2025**

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Peace be with you!

Dear brothers, good morning and welcome!

I deeply appreciate the effort all of you have made to come on pilgrimage to Rome, since I realize how pressing are the demands of your ministry. Yet each of you, like myself, before being a shepherd, is a sheep, a member of the Lord’s flock. So we too, even before others, are asked to pass through the Holy Door, the symbol of Christ the Saviour. If we are to lead the Churches entrusted to our care, we must let ourselves be profoundly renewed by Jesus, the Good Shepherd, in order to conform ourselves fully to his heart and to the mystery of his love.

“Spes non confundit,” “Hope does not disappoint” (Rom 5:5). How often did we hear Pope Francis repeat those words of Saint Paul! They became one of his trademark phrases, so much so that he chose them to be the opening words of the Bull of Indiction of this Jubilee Year.

We, as Bishops, are the primary heirs of that prophetic legacy, which we must preserve and transmit to the People of God by our words and the way we live our lives. At times, preaching the message that hope does not disappoint means swimming against the tide, even in certain painful situations that appear to be hopeless. Yet it is precisely at those times when it becomes all the more apparent that our faith and our hope do not come from ourselves, but from God. If we are truly close to those

who suffer, the Holy Spirit can revive in their hearts even a flame that has all but died out (cf. Bull *Spes Non Confundit*, 3).

Dear friends, a Bishop is a witness to hope by his example of a life firmly grounded in God and completely devoted to the service of the Church. This will be the case only insofar as he is conformed to Christ in his personal life and in his apostolic ministry. The Spirit of the Lord will then shape his way of thinking, his feelings and his actions. Let us stop for a moment and together consider a few aspects of this witness.

First, the Bishop is the visible principle of unity in the particular Church entrusted to him. It is his duty to build communion among its members and with the universal Church by fostering the variety of gifts and ministries given for its own growth and for the spread of the Gospel. In this service, as in his entire mission, the Bishop can count on the special divine grace conferred on him at his episcopal ordination. This grace sustains him as a teacher of the faith, a minister of sanctification and a spiritual leader; it strengthens his commitment to the Kingdom of God, to the eternal salvation of souls and to the transformation of history by the power of the Gospel.

The second aspect I would like to consider, again in the light of Christ as the model of the Bishop's life, could be put this way: the Bishop is a man who lives the theological life. In a word, he is a person completely docile to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, who fills him with faith, hope and charity, and fans them into flame amid the various situations and challenges of daily life.

The Bishop, then, is a man of faith. Here I think of that marvelous passage in the Letter to the Hebrews (cf. Heb 11), where the author lists an entire genealogy of "witnesses" of faith, beginning with Abel. I think specifically of Moses, who was called by God to lead the people to the promised land, and who, we are told, "remained steadfast, as if seeing him who is unseen" (Heb 11:27). Here we have a magnificent portrayal of a man of faith: he is one who, by the grace of God, sees ahead, glimpses the goal, and perseveres in times of trial. Think of all the times that Moses interceded for the people before God. So too, the Bishop in his Church acts as an intercessor, because the Spirit keeps the flame of faith alive in his heart.

Then too, the Bishop is a man of hope, since "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb 11:1). Especially

at moments of difficulty in people's lives, the Bishop, by this theological virtue, helps them not to despair: not simply by his words but by his closeness. When families are greatly burdened and public institutions fail to provide adequate support; when young people are disillusioned and fed up with empty promises; when the elderly and those with grave disabilities feel abandoned, the Bishop is close to them, not offering easy solutions, but rather the experience of communities that strive to live the Gospel in simplicity and solidarity.

Faith and hope then come together in him as a man of pastoral charity. The whole life of the Bishop, his entire ministry, diverse and multifaceted as it is, finds its unity in what Saint Augustine calls the *amoris officium*. Here his theological life is expressed and shines forth in the highest degree. Whether preaching, visiting communities, listening to priests and deacons, or making administrative decisions, all that he does is inspired and motivated by the charity of Christ the Shepherd.

With the help of God's grace, drawn daily from the celebration of the Eucharist and his prayer, the Bishop gives an example of fraternal love to his Coadjutor or Auxiliary, to the Bishop Emeritus and to the Bishops of neighboring dioceses, to the priests, his closest collaborators, particularly those experiencing moments of difficulty or illness. His heart is open and welcoming, and so is his home.

Dear brothers, this is the theological core of the life of a Bishop. Centered on these aspects, and always awakened by the same Spirit, a number of other essential virtues can be added: pastoral prudence, poverty, perfect continence in celibacy, and human virtues.

Pastoral prudence is the practical wisdom that guides the Bishop in his decisions, in his governance, in his relations with the faithful and with their associations. A clear sign of prudence is his exercise of dialogue as a style and method, both in his relationships with others and in his presiding over participatory bodies: in other words, in his overseeing of synodality in his particular Church. Pope Francis taught us much in this regard, insisting with pedagogical wisdom on synodality as a dimension of the life of the Church. Pastoral prudence also enables the Bishop to guide the diocesan community by cherishing its traditions and by promoting new directions and initiatives.

To bear witness to the Lord Jesus, the Bishop lives a life of evangelical poverty. His is a simple, sober and generous lifestyle, dignified and at the

same time suited to the conditions of the majority of his people. The poor must find in him a father and a brother, and never feel uncomfortable in meeting him or entering his home. In his personal life, he must be detached from the pursuit of wealth and from forms of favoritism based on money or power. The Bishop must never forget that, like Jesus, he has been anointed with the Holy Spirit and sent to bring good news to the poor (cf. Lk 4:18).

Together with material poverty, the life of the Bishop is also marked by that specific form of poverty which is celibacy and virginity for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven (cf. Mt 19:12). Here, it is not just a question of living as a celibate, but of practicing chastity of heart and conduct, and in this way living a life of Christian discipleship and presenting to all the authentic image of the Church, holy and chaste in her members as in her Head. He must be firm and decisive in dealing with situations that can cause scandal and with every case of abuse, especially involving minors, and fully respect the legislation currently in force.

Finally, the Bishop is called to cultivate those human virtues which the Council Fathers also chose to mention in the Decree *Presbyterorum Ordinis* (No. 3). These are of great help to him in his ministry and in his relationships with others.

They include fairness, sincerity, magnanimity, openness of mind and heart, the ability to rejoice with those who rejoice and to suffer with those who suffer, as well as self-control, delicacy, patience, discretion, great openness to listening and engaging in dialogue, and willingness to serve. These virtues, which each of us possess to a greater or lesser extent by nature, can and must be cultivated in conformity to the Lord Jesus, with the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Dear brothers, may the prayers of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Saints Peter and Paul obtain for you and your communities the graces that you most need. In particular, may they help you to be men of communion, always promoting unity in the diocesan presbyterate. May every priest, without exception, sense the fatherhood, brotherhood and friendship of his Bishop. That spirit of communion encourages priests in their pastoral outreach and makes the particular Church grow in unity.

Thank you for remembering me in your prayers! I am also praying for you and from my heart, I offer all of you my blessing.

**75. ADDRESS OF POPE LEO XIV  
TO REDEMPTORIST AND SCALABRINIAN BISHOPS  
Consistory Hall  
Thursday, 26 June 2025**

In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Peace be with you!

Your Eminences, Your Excellencies,

Reverend Superiors,

I am happy about this meeting, and find the occasion that generates it beautiful: the choice of two Religious Congregations to meet and dialogue with those brethren whose episcopal ministry they have given to the Church. This is an exchange that certainly enriches the Bishops present, your Communities and the entire People of God, as the Second Vatican Council teaches (cf. Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, 7; Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes – Congregation for Bishops, Directives for the Mutual Relations Between Bishops and Religious in the Church, 2).

The Church is grateful to your Institutes, of whom it has asked, with the appointment of bishops among its members, a not inconsiderable sacrifice in times of a shortage of religious brothers, when depriving you of confrères engaged in the service of various works entails not a few problems. Perhaps the General will say something to me, but... [laughter]. At the same time, though, it has given a great gift to your Congregations, because service to the universal Church is the most beautiful grace and joy for any religious family, as your Founders would certainly confirm.

You in particular, Scalabrinian and Redemptorist religious, chosen and consecrated for service to the Episcopate and also to the Cardinals, bring into your ministry the legacy of two important charisms, especially in our days: service to migrants and the evangelization of the poor and the distant.

Saint Alphonsus Maria de' Liguori, entering into contact with the poverty of the most neglected neighbourhoods of Naples in the eighteenth century, renounced a wealthy life and a lucrative career, embracing the

mission of bringing the Gospel to the last.

Saint John Baptist Scalabrini, a century later, was able to feel and understand the hopes and sufferings of the many people who left, leaving everything behind, in search of a better future for themselves and their families in faraway lands.

Both of them were Founders, became bishops, and knew how to respond to the challenges of social and economic systems which on the one hand opened new frontiers at various levels, but on the other left behind a great deal of unheeded misery and many problems, creating pockets of degradation that no one seemed to want to deal with.

At a historic moment that also presents great opportunities and at the same time no shortage of difficulties and contradictions, by celebrating the Jubilee of hope we want to recall that, today as yesterday, the voice to listen to in order to understand what to do is that of “the love of God ... poured out into our hearts through the holy Spirit that has been given to us” (Rm 5:5).

Even in our world, the Lord’s work always goes before us: we are required to conform our minds and hearts to it through wise discernment, and I am convinced that the discussion you have promoted will be very useful to this end. I encourage you, therefore, to maintain and to nurture, also for the future, these relations of fraternal help, with generosity and selflessness, for the good of all Christ’s flock. I thank you for the great work you do, and I bless you heartily, together with all your communities. Thank you!

**76. ADDRESS OF POPE LEO XIV  
TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE PLENARY SESSION  
OF THE “REUNION OF AID AGENCIES FOR THE ORIENTAL  
CHURCHES” (ROACO)  
Clementine Hall  
Thursday, 26 June 2025**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Peace be with you!

Your Eminence, Your Excellencies,

Dear priests, brothers and sisters,

Peace be with you! I offer you a warm welcome and I am pleased to meet you as you conclude your Plenary Assembly. I greet His Eminence Cardinal Gugerotti, the other Superiors of the Dicastery, the Officials, and all of you, members of the ROACO Agencies.

“God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Cor 9:7). I realize that, for you, supporting the Eastern Churches is not primarily a task, but a mission carried out in the name of the Gospel, which, as the word itself indicates, is a proclamation of joy, which before all else gladdens the heart of God, who never allows himself to be outdone in generosity. I thank you because, together with all your benefactors, you are sowing seeds of hope in the lands of the Christian East, which today, as never before, are devastated by wars, plundered by special interests, and covered by a cloud of hatred that renders the air unbreathable and toxic. You provide a breath of oxygen to the Eastern Churches, so worn down by the conflicts in course. For many people, poor in means but rich in faith, you are a light that shines amid the dark shadows of hatred. I ask you with all my heart to continue to do everything possible to help these Churches, so precious and so greatly afflicted.

The history of the Eastern Catholic Churches has often been marked by suffering and violence. Sadly, there have also been instances of oppression and misunderstanding within the Catholic community itself, which at times failed to acknowledge and appreciate the value of traditions other than those of the West. Yet today, violent conflict seems to be raging in the Christian East with a diabolical intensity previously unknown. Your annual meeting has itself been affected by the physical absence of those who were to have come from the Holy Land but proved unable to make the journey.

Our hearts bleed when we think of Ukraine, the tragic and inhumane situation in Gaza and the Middle East, ravaged by the spread of war. All of us, by virtue of our humanity, are called upon to examine the causes of these conflicts, to identify those that are real and to attempt to resolve them. But also to reject those that are false, the result of emotional manipulation and rhetoric, and to make every effort to bring them to light. People must not die because of fake news.

It is truly distressing to see the principle of “might makes right” prevailing in so many situations today, all for the sake of legitimizing the pur-

suit of self-interest. It is troubling to see that the force of international law and humanitarian law seems no longer to be binding, replaced by the alleged right to coerce others. This is unworthy of our humanity, shameful for all mankind and for the leaders of nations. After centuries of history, how can anyone believe that acts of war bring about peace and not backfire on those who commit them? How can we think that we are laying the foundations of the future apart from cooperation and a global vision inspired by the common good? How can we continue to betray the desire of the world's peoples for peace with propaganda about weapons buildup, as if military supremacy will resolve problems instead of fueling even greater hatred and desire for revenge? People are beginning to realize the amount of money that ends up in the pockets of merchants of death; money that could be used to build new hospitals and schools is instead being used to destroy those that already exist!

I ask myself: as Christians, in addition to feeling outraged, speaking out and rolling up our sleeves as peacemakers and promoters of dialogue, what else can we do? I believe that first and foremost we really need to pray. It is up to us to make every tragic news story, every newsreel that we see, a cry of intercession before God. And then to offer help, just as you do and as many others can do through you.

Yet there is more, and I say this, thinking in particular of the Christian East: there is witness. It is our call to remain faithful to Jesus, without allowing ourselves to end up in the clutches of power. It is our call to imitate Christ, who conquered evil by the love he showed on the cross, and to show a way of reigning quite different from that of Herod and Pilate. Herod, for fear of being deposed, murdered children, who even today continue to be torn apart by bombs; Pilate washed his hands, as we risk doing every day until we arrive at the point of no return.

Let us look to Jesus, who calls us to heal the wounds of history solely by the gentle power of his glorious cross, which radiates the strength of forgiveness, the hope of new beginnings, and the resolve to remain honest and transparent in a sea of corruption. Let us follow Christ, who freed hearts from hatred, and show by our example how to break free of the mindset of division and revenge. I would like to thank and spiritually embrace all those Eastern Christians who respond to evil with good. Thank you, dear brothers and sisters, for the witness you give, especially when you remain in your lands as disciples and witnesses of Christ.

Dear friends of ROACO, in your work, you see the immense sufferings caused by war and terrorism – and here I think of the recent terrible attack on the Church of Saint Elias in Damascus – but you also see the seeds of the Gospel taking root in the desert. You encounter the People of God who persevere by looking up to heaven, praying to God, and loving their neighbors. You experience firsthand the grace and beauty of Eastern traditions, of liturgies that allow God to dwell in time and space, of centuries-old chants imbued with praise, glory, and mystery, which raise an incessant plea for forgiveness for humanity. You encounter men and women who, often nameless, join the great ranks of martyrs and saints of the Christian East. In the dark night of conflict, you are witnesses to the light of the East.

I would like this light of wisdom and salvation to be better known in the Catholic Church, where it is still largely unknown and where, in some places, the faith is in danger of becoming lifeless, also because the hope expressed repeatedly by Saint John Paul II has not yet been realized. Forty years ago, he said: “The Church must learn once again to breathe with both lungs, the Eastern and the Western” (Address to the Sacred College of Cardinals, 28 June 1985).

The Christian East, however, can only be preserved if it is loved, and it can only be loved if it is known. Hence, it is necessary to implement the clear bidding of the Magisterium to become familiar with their treasures, for example by organizing basic courses on the Eastern Churches in Seminaries, Theological Faculties, and Catholic Universities (cf. SAINT JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Letter *Oriente Lumen*, 24; CONGREGATION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION, Circular Letter *Eu égard au développement*, 9-14). There is also a need for encounter and the sharing of pastoral activity, since Eastern Catholics today are no longer our distant cousins who celebrate unfamiliar rites, but our brothers and sisters who, due to forced migration, are our next-door neighbors.

Their sense of the sacred, their deep faith, confirmed by suffering, and their spirituality, redolent of the divine mysteries, can benefit the thirst for God, latent yet at the same present, in the West.

Let us entrust this shared growth in faith to the intercession of the Holy Mother of God and of the Apostles Peter and Paul, who united East and West. I bless you and encourage you to persevere in charity, animated by the hope of Christ. Thank you

**77. ADDRESS OF POPE LEO XIV  
TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE INTERNATIONAL DAY  
AGAINST DRUG ABUSE AND ILLICIT TRAFFICKING  
San Damaso courtyard  
Thursday, 26 June 2025**

Let us begin with the Sign of the Cross: in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Peace be with you!

Welcome to you all, and I hope the sun is not too strong... But God is great, and he will accompany us. Thank you for your presence!

[Greeting from the Undersecretary of State at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Alfredo Mantovano, and testimony from Paola Clericuzio, of the San Patrignano Community]

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning and welcome!

I thank those who have made this meeting possible, which in many ways brings us to the heart of the Jubilee, a year of grace in which dignity, too often diminished or denied, is recognized to everyone. Hope is a word rich in history for you: it is not a slogan, but light rediscovered through great work. I would like to repeat to you, then, that greeting that changes the heart: peace be with all of you! On Easter evening, Jesus greeted the disciples closed in the Upper Room in this way.

They had abandoned him, they believed they had lost him for ever, they were fearful and disappointed, and some had already gone. It is Jesus, however, who finds them, who comes looking for them again. He enters behind closed doors into the place where they are as if buried alive. He brings peace, he recreates them with forgiveness, he breathes on them: that is, he infuses the Holy Spirit, who is the breath of God in us. When there is no air, when there is no horizon, our dignity withers. Let us not forget that the risen Jesus still comes and brings his breath! He often does so through the people who go beyond our closed doors and who, despite all that may have happened, see the dignity we have forgotten, or that has been denied to us.

Dear friends, your presence here is a testimony of freedom. I remember that when Pope Francis used to enter a prison, even on his last Holy

Thursday, he always asked himself that question: “Why them and not me?” Drugs and addiction are an invisible prison that you, in different ways, have known and fought, but we are all called to freedom. As I meet you, I think of the abyss of my heart and of every human heart. It is a Psalm, that is, the Bible, that calls the mystery that dwells in us an “abyss” (cf. Ps 63:7).

Saint Augustine confessed that only in Christ did the restlessness of his heart find peace. We seek peace and joy, we thirst for them. And many deceptions can delude and even imprison us in this quest.

Let us look around us, though. And let us read in each other’s faces a word that never betrays: together. We conquer evil together. Joy is found together. Injustice is fought together. The God who created and knows each one of us – and is more intimate to me than I am to myself – made us to be together. Of course, there are also bonds that hurt and human groups where freedom is lacking. But these, too, can only be overcome together, trusting those who do not profit from our suffering, those whom we can meet and who meet us with selfless attention.

Today, brothers and sisters, we are engaged in a battle that cannot be abandoned as long as, around us, anyone is still imprisoned in the various forms of addiction. Our fight is against those who make their immense business out of drugs and every other addiction – think of alcohol or gambling.

There are huge concentrations of interest and extensive criminal organizations that states have a duty to dismantle. It is easier to fight against their victims. Too often, in the name of security, war is waged against the poor, filling prisons with those who are merely the final link in a chain of death. Those who hold the chain in their hands instead manage to gain influence and impunity. Our cities must not be freed of the marginalized, but of marginalization; they must be cleared not of the desperate, but of desperation.

“How beautiful are those cities which overcome paralysing mistrust, integrate those who are different and make this very integration a new factor of development! How attractive are those cities which, even in their architectural design, are full of spaces which connect, relate and favour the recognition of others!” (Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, 210).

The Jubilee indicates the culture of encounter as the way to safety; it asks of us the restitution and redistribution of unjustly accumulated wealth, as the way to personal and civil reconciliation. "As in heaven, so on earth": the city of God commits us to prophecy in the city of men. And this - we know - can also lead to martyrdom today. The fight against drug trafficking, educational commitment among the poor, the defence of indigenous communities and migrants, and fidelity to the social doctrine of the Church are in many places considered subversive.

Dear young people, you are not spectators of the renewal our earth so badly needs: you are protagonists. God does great things with those he frees from evil. Another Psalm, beloved of the early Christians, says: "The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone" (118:22). Jesus was denied and crucified outside the gates of his city. Upon him, the cornerstone on which God rebuilds the world, you too are stones of great value in building a new humanity.

Jesus, who was denied, invites all of you, and if you have felt rejected and spent, you are now no more. Your mistakes, your sufferings, but above all your desire for life, make you witnesses that change is possible.

The Church needs you. Humanity needs you. Education and politics need you. Together, we will make the infinite dignity imprinted on each person prevail over every degrading addiction. Unfortunately, such dignity sometimes only shines through when it is almost completely lost. Then a shock occurs and it becomes clear that getting back up is a matter of life and death.

Well, today the whole of society needs that jolt, it needs your witness and the great work you are doing. Indeed, we all have the vocation to be freer and to be human, the vocation to peace. This is the most divine vocation. Let us go forward together, then, multiplying the places of healing, encounter and education: pastoral paths and social policies that start from the street and never give anyone up for lost. And you, pray too, that my ministry may be at the service of the hope of persons and peoples, at the service of all.

I entrust you to the maternal guidance of Mary Most Holy. And I bless you from my heart. Thank you!

**78. ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER  
TO THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING  
HAPPY PRIESTS – “I HAVE CALLED YOU FRIENDS” (Jn 15:15)  
PROMOTED BY THE DICASTERY FOR THE CLERGY  
Auditorium Conciliazione, Rome  
Thursday, 26 June 2025**

We begin with the Sign of the Cross, for we are all here because Christ, who died and rose again, has given us life and has called us to serve. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Peace be with you!

[Greeting of Cardinal Lazzaro You Heung-sik, Prefect of the Dicastery for the Clergy]

Dear brothers in the priesthood, queridos hermanos, dear brother priests,

Dear formators, seminarians, vocation promoters, friends in the Lord!

It is a great joy for me to be here with you today. At the heart of the Jubilee Year, we want to bear witness together that it is possible to be happy priests, because Christ has called us. Christ has made us His friends (cf. Jn 15:15): a grace we want to receive with gratitude and responsibility.

I thank Cardinal Lazzaro and all the collaborators of the Dicastery for the Clergy for their generous and competent service: an immense and precious work, often carried out in silence and discretion, which produces fruits of communion, formation, and renewal.

With this moment of fraternal – and international – exchange, we can value the patrimony of experiences already matured, fostering creativity, co-responsibility, and communion in the Church, so that what is sown with dedication and generosity in so many communities may become light and encouragement for all.

The words of Jesus, “I have called you friends” (Jn 15:15), are not only an affectionate statement to the disciples, but a true key to understanding the priestly ministry. Indeed, the priest is a friend of the Lord, called to live a personal and intimate relationship with Him, nourished by the Word, by the celebration of the Sacraments, and by daily prayer. This friendship with Christ is the spiritual foundation of the ordained minis-

try, the meaning of our celibacy, and the energy for the ecclesial service to which we dedicate our lives. It sustains us in moments of trial and allows us to renew each day the “yes” we pronounced at the beginning of our vocation.

In particular, dearest friends, from this key word I would like to draw three implications for priestly formation.

First, formation is a journey of relationship. Becoming friends of Christ means being formed in relationship, not merely in competencies. Priestly formation, therefore, cannot be reduced to the acquisition of knowledge, but is a journey of familiarity with the Lord that involves the whole person – heart, intelligence, freedom – conforming him to the image of the Good Shepherd. Only one who lives in friendship with Christ and is imbued with His Spirit can proclaim with authenticity, console with compassion, and guide with wisdom. This requires deep listening, meditation, and a rich and ordered interior life.

Second, fraternity is an essential style of priestly life. To become friends of Christ means to live as brothers among priests and bishops, and not as competitors or individualists. Formation must therefore help to build strong bonds within the presbyterate, as an expression of a synodal Church in which we grow together, sharing the labors and joys of ministry. For how could we, as ministers, be builders of living communities if, among us, there were not first of all genuine and effective fraternity?

Furthermore, forming priests who are friends of Christ means forming men capable of loving, listening, praying, and serving together. This is why great care must be given to the preparation of formators, since the effectiveness of their work depends above all on the witness of their lives and their mutual communion. The very institution of seminaries reminds us that the formation of future ministers cannot be carried out in isolation, but requires the involvement of all the friends of the Lord who live as missionary disciples at the service of God’s People.

In this regard, I would also like to say a word about vocations. Despite the signs of crisis in the life and mission of priests, God continues to call and remains faithful to His promises. Spaces are needed where His voice can be heard. That is why environments and forms of youth ministry permeated with the Gospel are so important, places where vocations to the total gift of self may emerge and mature. Have the courage to make strong and liberating proposals! Looking at the young people who, in

our time, say their generous “Here I am” to the Lord, all of us feel the need to renew our own “yes,” to rediscover the beauty of being missionary disciples in the footsteps of Christ, the Good Shepherd.

Dearest friends, we are celebrating this meeting on the eve of the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus: it is from this “burning bush” that our vocation springs; it is through this fountain of grace that we want to allow ourselves to be transformed.

The Encyclical *Dilexit Nos* of Pope Francis, if it is a precious gift for the whole Church, is especially so for us priests. It challenges us strongly: it asks us to preserve at the same time mysticism and social commitment, contemplation and action, silence and proclamation.

Our time confronts us: many seem to have distanced themselves from faith, but deep within many hearts, especially those of the young, there is a thirst for the infinite and for salvation. Many experience as it were an absence of God, but every human being is made for Him, and the Father’s plan is to make Christ the heart of the world.

That is why we want to rediscover together the missionary impulse. A mission that proposes the Gospel of Jesus with courage and love. Through our pastoral action, it is the Lord Himself who cares for His flock, gathers the scattered, bends down over the wounded, and supports the discouraged. Imitating the example of the Master, let us grow in faith and thus become credible witnesses of the vocation we have received. When one believes, it shows: the happiness of the minister reflects his encounter with Christ, sustaining him in mission and service.

Dear brothers in the priesthood, thank you to all who came from afar! Thank you to each of you for your daily dedication, especially in places of formation, in existential peripheries, and in difficult, sometimes dangerous contexts. Remembering the priests who gave their lives, even to the shedding of blood, let us today renew our availability to live without reserve an apostolate of compassion and joy.

Thank you for who you are! For you remind everyone that it is beautiful to be a priest and that every call of the Lord is above all a call to His joy. We are not perfect, but we are friends of Christ, brothers of one another, and children of His tender Mother Mary, and this is enough for us.

Let us turn to the Lord Jesus, to His merciful Heart that burns with love

for each person. Let us ask Him for the grace to be missionary disciples and pastors according to His will: seeking the lost, serving the poor, and humbly guiding those entrusted to us. May His Heart inspire our projects, transform our hearts, and renew us in mission. I bless you with affection and I pray for all of you.

[A priest asks the Holy Father if he can embrace him]

If one, then for all! Because afterwards the others will want it too! Do you agree? [the priests reply: Yes!] One for all, then!

[In Spanish] Raise your hand if you came from Latin America!

[In English] How many are from Africa?... And from Asia?... And from Europe?... And from the United States?

[The priest who made the request comes forward, introduces himself, and embraces the Holy Father].

In representation of all present at this moment.

[In Spanish] To conclude, let us propose a moment of prayer.

[In Italian] A very brief moment, but, as I said earlier in the address: how important it is! I want to emphasize the importance of the priest's spiritual life. Many times, when you need help, look for a good "companion," a spiritual director, a good confessor. No one here is alone. And even if you are working in the most distant mission, you are never alone! Strive to live what Pope Francis has so often called "closeness": closeness to the Lord, closeness to your Bishop or religious Superior, and closeness also among yourselves, because you must truly be friends, brothers; living this beautiful experience of walking together, knowing that we are called to be disciples of the Lord. We have a great mission, and we can carry it out together. Let us always count on the grace of God, on my closeness as well, and together we can truly be this voice in the world. Thank you!

Let us now pray together: Our Father...

And to Mary, our Mother, we say: Hail Mary...

[Blessing]

Happiness to all of you! May God always bless you!

**79. ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIV  
TO THE DELEGATION OF THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE SOLEMNITY OF SAINTS PETER AND PAUL  
28 June 2025**

Your Eminences,  
Dear Brothers in Christ,

I am especially happy to welcome, for the first time after my election as Bishop of Rome and successor of the Apostle Peter, this Delegation representing the sister Church of Constantinople as we celebrate the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, Patrons of the Church of Rome. This traditional exchange of Delegations between the two Churches on the occasion of the respective feasts of their Patron Saints is a sign of the profound communion already existing between us, and a reflection of the fraternal bond that united the Apostles Peter and Andrew.

After centuries of disagreements and misunderstanding, the resumption of genuine dialogue between the sister Churches of Rome and Constantinople was made possible through courageous and farsighted steps taken by Pope Paul VI and Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras. Their venerable successors to the Sees of Rome and Constantinople have pursued with conviction the same path of reconciliation, thus further strengthening our close relations. Here I would like to mention the witness of sincere closeness to the Catholic Church given by the Ecumenical Patriarch, His All Holiness Bartholomew, by his personal participation in the funeral of the late Pope Francis, and again at the Mass inaugurating my Pontificate.

As I think back with gratitude on the progress made thus far, I assure you of my desire to persevere in the effort to restore full visible communion between our Churches. The attainment of this goal can only come about, with God's help, through a continued commitment to respectful listening and fraternal dialogue. For this reason, I am open to any suggestions that you may offer in this regard, always in consultation with my brother Bishops of the Catholic Church who, each in his own way, share with me the responsibility for the complete and visible unity of the Church (cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, 23).

Your Eminences, dear brothers in Christ, I thank you most heartily for your presence in Rome on this solemn occasion. I ask you kindly to convey my cordial greetings to Patriarch Bartholomew and the members of the Holy Synod, together with my gratitude for sending a Delegation again this year. May Saints Peter and Paul, Saint Andrew and the Holy Mother of God, who live eternally in the perfect communion of the saints, accompany and sustain us in our efforts in the service of the Gospel. Thank you!

**80. ADDRESS OF POPE LEO XIV  
TO THE REPRESENTATIVES OF CERTAIN WOMEN'S  
RELIGIOUS INSTITUTES  
Clementine Hall  
Monday, 30 June 2025**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
Peace be with you!

Dear Sisters, good morning and welcome!

I am pleased to meet with you. For some of you it is the occasion of your General Chapter, others are here for your Jubilee pilgrimage. In both cases, you have come to the tomb of Peter in order to renew your love for the Lord and your fidelity to the Church.

You belong to Congregations that were founded at different times and in distinct circumstances: Sisters of the Order of Saint Basil the Great; Daughters of Divine Charity; Augustinian Sisters of Amparo; Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Hearts. Yet your histories share a common thread that can be seen in the light of such great historical witnesses to the spiritual life as Augustine, Basil and Francis, whose asceticism, courage and holiness of life inspired your founders to foster new ways of serving others. This is evident especially in your care for the weakest: children, poor girls and boys, orphans, migrants, and more recently for the elderly and the sick as well as many other ministries of charity.

Your response to the challenges of the past and the vitality of your present make clear that fidelity to the ancient wisdom of the Gospel is the

best way forward for those who, led by the Holy Spirit, undertake new paths of self-giving, dedicated to loving God and neighbor and listening attentively to the signs of the times (cf. SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, 4; 11).

With this in mind, the Second Vatican Council, referring to religious institutes dedicated to works of charity, emphasized how important it is that in them “the entire religious life of the members should be imbued with an apostolic spirit, and all their apostolic activity with a religious spirit,” so that they “may first answer their call to follow Christ and to serve Christ himself in his members... in intimate union with him” (Decree *Perfectae Caritatis*, 8).

Saint Augustine, speaking of the primacy of God in the Christian life, affirms that, “God is your everything. If you are hungry, God is your bread; if you are thirsty, God is your water; if you are in darkness, God is your light that never fades; if you are naked, God is your everlasting garment” (In *Ioannis Evangelium*, 13, 5).

Indeed, we would do well to ask ourselves: to what extent are these words true for me? How much does the Lord satisfy my thirst for life, love or light? These are important questions. Moreover, this rootedness in Christ is what led those who went before us – men and women like us, with gifts and limitations like ours – to do things they perhaps never thought they could achieve. This rootedness enabled them to sow seeds of goodness that, enduring throughout the centuries and across continents, have now reached practically the entire world, as your presence here demonstrates.

As I mentioned, some of you are engaged in your General Chapters, others are here for the Jubilee. In any case, you are faced with important choices that will determine your future, that of your sisters and of the Church herself. For this reason, it seems most appropriate to conclude by reiterating, for all of us, the beautiful hope expressed by Saint Paul in addressing the Christians of Ephesus: I pray that “Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God” (Eph 3:17-19). Thank you for your work and your fidelity. May the Blessed Virgin Mary accompany you. And I give you my blessing.

**81. ADDRESS OF POPE LEO XIV  
TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE GENERAL CHAPTERS  
OF EIGHT RELIGIOUS INSTITUTES  
Pontifical Villas of Castel Gandolfo, Inner courtyard  
of the Apostolic Palace  
Saturday, 12 July 2025**

In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Peace be with you.

Welcome to you all! Let us sit down and reflect together a little.

Dear brothers and sisters,

I welcome you with joy on the occasion of your Chapters and Assemblies. I greet the Superiors General, the members of the Councils, and all of you.

You have gathered to pray, to discuss and to reflect together on what the Lord asks of you for the future. Your Founders and Foundresses, docile to the action of the Holy Spirit, have left you the legacy of various charisms for the edification of the Body of Christ (cf. Eph 4:11-12), and it is precisely so that this may grow according to God's plans that the Church asks of you the service that you are carrying out (cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Decree *Perfectae caritatis*, 4).

Your respective Institutes embody complementary aspects of the life and action of all the People of God: the offering of self in union with the Sacrifice of Christ, the mission *ad gentes*, love for the Church preserved and transmitted, the education and formation of the young. These are different ways in which the one and eternal reality that animates them all is expressed in charismatic form: God's love for humanity.

As is customary, then, each of your Congregations identified particular angles, in the light of which to reinterpret the legacy received, in order to update and modernize its contents. These pathways of work, which you chose during the time of preparation, in prayer and mutual listening, are also a precious gift insofar as they are the fruit of the Spirit. It is He who, through the contribution of many, under the guidan-

ce of the Pastors, “helps the Christian community to advance in charity towards the fullness of truth (cf. Jn 16:13)” (Benedict XVI, Homily at the Holy Mass for the Inauguration of the Fifth General Conference of the Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean, 13 May 2007). You have thus formulated guidelines that contain fundamental calls: to renew an authentic missionary spirit, to make one’s own the attitude “that is also yours in Christ Jesus” (cf. Phil 2:5), to promote peace, to cultivate pastoral co-responsibility in local churches, and so on. To stay by their side and to remember them together, at this time, helps us to grasp the richness of our being in a community, especially as men and women religious, engaged in the same wonderful adventure of “[following] Christ more nearly” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 916).

May this renew and confirm in all of us the awareness and the joy of being Church, and in particular spur you, in your discernment in the Chapters, to think on a large scale, as unique pieces of a plan that exceeds you and involves you beyond your own expectations: the plan of salvation with which God wants to bring all of humanity back to himself, as one big family (cf. Francis, General Audience, 29 May 2013). This is the spirit in which your Institutes were born, and this is the perspective in which to place every effort, so that it may contribute, through small lights, to spreading over the whole earth the light of Christ, which never dims (cf. Roman Missal, Easter Precony).

Dear friends, let us ask the Lord together to be docile to the voice of his Spirit, who “teaches everything” (cf. Jn 14:26), and without whose help, in our weakness, we do not even know how to ask as we ought (cf. Rom 8:26).

Thank you for your work and for your faithful presence in so many parts of the world. I bless you from my heart, and I pray for you. Thank you!

Let us pray together:

[Our Father]

[Blessing]

Thank you all!

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**82. GREETING OF HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIV  
TO THE AUGUSTINIAN SISTERS, SERVANTS OF JESUS AND MARY  
Saturday, 5 July 2025**

In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,

Peace be with you!

Dear sisters,

I am pleased to meet you at the end of your provincial Chapter: in this week of prayer, discernment and joint planning, you have been able to renew your adhesion to the charism of your foundress, the venerable Sister Maria Teresa Spinelli.

While the process of her canonization continues, your journey of holiness proceeds too! As Augustinian Sisters, Servants of Jesus and Mary, I encourage you to let yourselves be guided anew by the name you bear. Indeed, the service you carry out every day is realized first and foremost in the consecration of life to the Lord, and is strengthened in sincere devotion to his and our Mother.

By imitating Sister Maria Teresa, you will therefore be patient in tribulations, because it is precisely in our trials that the Lord confirms his faithfulness; you will be courageous in the mission, so that the educational work to which you dedicate yourselves may form wise minds and hearts capable of listening and of passion for humanity; you will be unwavering in the following of Christ, who is “the way, the truth and the life” (Jn 14:6), and therefore the criterion for all our cultural initiatives. We know that a culture without truth becomes an instrument of the powerful: instead of freeing consciences, it confuses and distracts them according to the interests of the market, fashion or worldly success.

In this regard, I advise you to pick up again a work by the holy Doctor, our father Augustine, *De Magistro*, to contemplate it in the near future, as you gather the fruits of your Chapter. In this work, Augustine affirms that external teaching must always lead to the encounter with the inner Master, who is Jesus (cf. I, 11). In his name, I wish all the best to your communities, and I wholeheartedly impart the apostolic blessing to you. Thank you!

**83. ADDRESS OF POPE LEO XIV  
TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE GENERAL CHAPTERS  
OF EIGHT RELIGIOUS INSTITUTES  
Pontifical Villas of Castel Gandolfo, Inner courtyard  
of the Apostolic Palace  
Saturday, 12 July 2025**

In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Peace be with you.

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Dear brothers and sisters,

I welcome you with joy on the occasion of your Chapters and Assemblies. I greet the Superiors General, the members of the Councils, and all of you.

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As is customary, then, each of your Congregations identified particular angles, in the light of which to reinterpret the legacy received, in order to update and modernize its contents. These pathways of work, which you chose during the time of preparation, in prayer and mutual listening, are also a precious gift insofar as they are the fruit of the Spirit. It is He who, through the contribution of many, under the guidance of the Pastors, "helps the Christian community to advance in charity towards

the fullness of truth (cf. Jn 16:13)” (Benedict XVI, Homily at the Holy Mass for the Inauguration of the Fifth General Conference of the Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean, 13 May 2007).

You have thus formulated guidelines that contain fundamental calls: to renew an authentic missionary spirit, to make one’s own the attitude “that is also yours in Christ Jesus” (cf. Phil 2:5), to promote peace, to cultivate pastoral co-responsibility in local churches, and so on. To stay by their side and to remember them together, at this time, helps us to grasp the richness of our being in a community, especially as men and women religious, engaged in the same wonderful adventure of “[following] Christ more nearly” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 916).

May this renew and confirm in all of us the awareness and the joy of being Church, and in particular spur you, in your discernment in the Chapters, to think on a large scale, as unique pieces of a plan that exceeds you and involves you beyond your own expectations: the plan of salvation with which God wants to bring all of humanity back to himself, as one big family (cf. Francis, General Audience, 29 May 2013). This is the spirit in which your Institutes were born, and this is the perspective in which to place every effort, so that it may contribute, through small lights, to spreading over the whole earth the light of Christ, which never dims (cf. Roman Missal, Easter Precony).

Dear friends, let us ask the Lord together to be docile to the voice of his Spirit, who “teaches everything” (cf. Jn 14:26), and without whose help, in our weakness, we do not even know how to ask as we ought (cf. Rom 8:26).

Thank you for your work and for your faithful presence in so many parts of the world. I bless you from my heart, and I pray for you. Thank you!

Let us pray together:

[Our Father]

[Blessing]

Thank you all!

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**84. ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIV  
TO A GROUP OF YOUNG PEOPLE FROM PERU  
Clementine Hall  
Monday, 28 July 2025**

In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
Peace be with you. Thank you.  
Happy National Fiesta to all Peruvians!  
Dear young people,

I welcome you to this house of Peter, where you come as pilgrims of hope. You are all pilgrims of hope, and you come to encounter thousands of other young people and to celebrate the Jubilee together. In seeing you, I also think of your families and of the many people of your parish communities who have surely helped you, with great sacrifices and efforts, to make this keenly awaited journey possible. I greet you all with gratitude and joy.

On the eve of this event, which is so important for young people throughout the world, the Gospel of today's Mass enlightens us in a particular way. They are two parables that help us in our Christian journey: the first talks about a tiny mustard seed, and the second, a little leaven (cf. Mt 13:13-35). As we see, they are two almost insignificant elements, we might say: and yet, with the strength of life they carry in them, they can transform, grow and serve the purpose for which they were created.

We too are small, but we are not alone; the Lord wanted us to be part of a great family, the family of the Church. Incorporated into it in Christ, like grapes on the vine, we can grow and bear fruit, helped by the Lord's grace. Saint Augustine speaks about these two parables, commenting on one of the Psalms, Psalm 69, and he too expresses this power of what is small, which when it grows takes root in a people, the people of God who spread throughout the earth (cf. Commentary on Psalm 69, I, 1).

In these days of the Jubilee of Youth, you are all having the beautiful experience of feeling part of God's people, part of the universal Church, which envelops and embraces all the earth, without distinction of race, language or nation, spreading like the mustard plant and fermenting like yeast.

Dear young people, I would like you to keep everything you live in these days in your heart, but not to conserve it only for yourselves. This is very

important: let what you will experience here be not only for yourselves. We must learn how to share. Please, let all of this remain not only as a memory, like a nice photo, as something from the past. When you return to Peru, I would like you to flood those lands with the joy and the power of the Gospel, with the Good News of Jesus Christ. May all the people you meet be able to see in you the face of Christ who loves and who gives himself, who continues to be present in every baptized person. To this end, love and serve freely, in your daily lives, in the small things, in the hidden things, because you have experienced the joy of being loved first, and because you have received everything freely from God our Father.

The rucksacks that accompany you in these days, containing the bare essentials, are the sign of the mission the Pope is entrusting to you today: be missionaries wherever you go, let the Lord's presence show in you, as our beloved Peruvian saints did. You know that Pope Francis always spoke of Peru as a land that is "ensantada", with many saints, but not only from the past: saints also of today and tomorrow.

May God bless you and Our Lady of Evangelization protect you always. Thank you.

[Blessing]

Viva Christ!

**85. ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIV  
TO CATHOLIC DIGITAL MISSIONARIES AND INFLUENCERS  
St. Peter's Basilica  
Tuesday, 29 July 2025**

In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, peace be with you!

Dear brothers and sisters, we have begun with this greeting: peace be with you!

How much we need peace in these times marked by hostility and war, which in turn calls us to give witness to the greeting of the Risen Lord: "Peace be with you!" (Jn 20:19). May his peace be with all of us, in our

hearts and in our actions.

This is the mission of the Church: to proclaim peace to the world! The peace that comes from the Lord, who conquered death, brings us God's forgiveness, gives us the life of the Father, and shows us the way of Love!

1. This is the mission that the Church entrusts to each of you who have come to Rome for your Jubilee. You are here to renew your commitment to nourish Christian hope in social networks and online spaces. Peace needs to be sought, proclaimed, and shared everywhere, both in the places where we see the tragedy of war and in the empty hearts of those who have lost the meaning of life and the desire for introspection and the spiritual life.

Perhaps, today more than ever, we need missionary disciples who convey the gift of the Risen Lord to the world; who voice to the ends of the earth the hope that Jesus gives us (cf. Acts 1:3-8); and who go wherever there is a heart that waits, seeks, and is in need. Yes, to the ends of the earth, to the farthest reaches, where there is no hope.

2. There is a second challenge in this mission: always look for the "suffering flesh of Christ" in every brother and sister you encounter online. Today we find ourselves in a new culture, deeply characterized and formed by technology. It is up to us – it is up to each one of you – to ensure that this culture remains human.

Science and technology influence the way we live in the world, even affecting how we understand ourselves and how we relate to God, how we relate to one another. But nothing that comes from man and his creativity should be used to undermine the dignity of others. Our mission – your mission – is to nurture a culture of Christian humanism, and to do so together. This is the beauty of the "network" for all of us.

Faced with cultural changes throughout history, the Church has never remained passive; she has always sought to illuminate every age with the light and hope of Christ by discerning good from evil and what was good from what needed to be changed, transformed, and purified.

Today we are in a culture where the technological dimension is present in almost everything, especially as the widespread adoption of artificial intelligence will mark a new era in the lives of individuals and society as a whole. This is a challenge that we must face: reflecting on the authentic-

ty of our witness, on our ability to listen and speak, and on our capacity to understand and to be understood. We have a duty to work together to develop a way of thinking, to develop a language, of our time, that gives voice to Love.

It is not simply a matter of generating content, but of creating an encounter of hearts. This will entail seeking out those who suffer, those who need to know the Lord, so that they may heal their wounds, get back on their feet and find meaning in their lives. Above all, this process begins with accepting our own poverty, letting go of all pretense and recognizing our own inherent need for the Gospel. And this process is a communal endeavor.

3. This brings us to the third invitation in this mission, which I extend to all of you: “go and mend the nets.” Jesus called his first apostles while they were mending their fishing nets (cf. Mt 4:21-22).

He asks the same of us today. Indeed, he asks us to weave other nets: networks of relationships, of love, of gratuitous sharing where friendship is profound and authentic; networks where we can mend what has been broken, heal from loneliness, not focus on the number of followers, but experience the greatness of infinite Love in every encounter; networks that give space to others more than to ourselves, where no “bubble” can silence the voices of the weakest; networks that liberate and save; networks that help us rediscover the beauty of looking into each other’s eyes; networks of truth. In this way, every story of shared goodness will be a knot in a single, immense network: the network of networks, the network of God.

Be agents of communion, capable of breaking down the logic of division and polarization, of individualism and egocentrism. Centre yourselves on Christ, so as to overcome the logic of the world, of fake news, of frivolity, with the beauty and light of Truth (cf. Jn 8:31-32).

Before concluding with a blessing and commending your witness to the Lord, I would like to thank you for all the good you have done and continue to do in your lives: for pursuing your dreams, for your love for the Lord Jesus and your love for the Church, for the help you give to those who suffer, and for your journey along the virtual highways.

**86. GREETING TO YOUNG PEOPLE PRONOUNCED BY  
HIS HOLINESS AFTER HIS TOUR IN THE “POPEMOBILE”  
FOLLOWING THE HOLY MASS PRESIDED OVER BY  
ARCHBISHOP RINO FISICHELLA  
St. Peter’s Square  
Tuesday, 29 July 2025**

Buonasera!

Buenas tardes!

Good evening!

Jesus tells us: “You are the salt of the earth [...]. You are the light of the world.” (Mt. 5:13-14).

«Ustedes son la sal de la tierra [...] la luz del mundo» (Mt 5,13-14).

And today your voices, your enthusiasm, your cries — which are all for Jesus Christ — will be heard to the ends of the earth.

Today marks the beginning of a new journey, a jubilee of hope, and the world needs messages of hope. You are that message, and you must continue to give hope to everyone.

We hope that all of you will always be signs of hope in the world! Today is the beginning. In the coming days, you will have the opportunity to be a force that can bring God’s grace, a message of hope, and a light to the city of Rome, to Italy, and to the whole world. Let us walk together with our faith in Jesus Christ.

We must also cry out for peace in the world. Let us all say, “We want peace in the world!”

[From the Square: “We want peace in the world!”]

Let us pray for peace.

Let us pray for peace and be witnesses of the peace and reconciliation of Jesus Christ, the light that we are all seeking for today’s world.

[The Holy Father imparts his Blessing.]

See you soon. See you in Tor Vergata! Have a good week!

**87. GREETING OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV  
TO THE ARTISTS WHO WILL ANIMATE  
THE JUBILEE YOUTH VIGIL AT TOR VERGATA  
Clemetine Hall  
Saturday, 2 August 2025**

Archbishop Fisichella:

Holy Father, thank you very much! Especially for this meeting, which you wanted to be very informal. The presenters, actresses and actors who will enliven the event at Tor Vergata in the afternoon are present. They will begin around 15.00, and until your arrival with the beginning of the Vigil, they will entertain our young people who are already on their way; some have already arrived. Thank you very much for this moment, which we desired such a lot. Thank you!

Holy Father:

Thank you! Good morning to you all, and thank you for so many things. I wanted to have this little, let's say familiar, meeting with you right this morning, aware of the beauty, the art, the music, of all your talents that you offer to this great public we have in Rome in these days. More than half a million, they say, perhaps a million young people, who have come from so many countries in the world. For me it is a privilege, it is a blessing to be able to participate in this mission, in this service, as Bishop of Rome, as Holy Father, knowing above all the faith, enthusiasm and joy we share, and which gives a voice to what we have in our hearts, and which is above all the desire to find happiness, joy and love; to experience faith also with the gifts the Lord has given us: music, dance and many artistic forms that you will share this afternoon with the young people. It is truly a gift for us all and for the entire Church, and I thank you sincerely. Thank you for this moment, and I ask God to bless you all and help you to accompany these young people who have a great need to find the true joy, the true happiness that we all find in Jesus Christ. Best wishes to you, and many thanks!

**88. WORDS OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV  
TO YOUNG EGYPTIAN PILGRIMS,  
WHO HAVE COME TO ROME FOR THE JUBILEE OF YOUTH  
WITH THE YOUNG PASCALE RAFIC  
Room adjacent to the Audience Hall  
Saturday, 2 August 2025**

Dear Brothers and sisters, peace be with you,

Early this morning I received the sad news of a companion of yours traveling with you on pilgrimage, your fellow pilgrim, your sister who passed away unexpectedly last night I believe. And of course, the sadness that death brings to all of us is something that is very human and very understandable, especially being so far away from home and on an occasion like this when we really come together to celebrate our faith with joy. And then all of a sudden, we are reminded in a very powerful way, that our life is not superficial nor do we have control over our own lives nor do we know as Jesus himself says, neither the day nor the hour when for some reason our earthy life ends. But as we also learn in the Gospel, what Martha and Mary discovered when their brother Lazarus had died, and when Jesus was not with them at first but then came several days after his death, and their understanding was that Jesus is life and resurrection.

And so in a certain way, as we celebrate this Jubilee year of hope, we are reminded in a very powerful way how much our faith in Jesus Christ needs to be part of who we are, of how we live, of how we appreciate and respect one another, and especially of how we continue to move forward in spite of such painful experiences.

Saint Augustine tells us that when someone dies of course it is very human and very natural to cry, to feel that pain, to feel the loss of someone who is dear to us, and yet he also says, do not mourn as pagans do, because we too have seen Jesus Christ die on the cross and rise from the dead. And it is our hope in the resurrection, that is the ultimate source of our hope, and we speak about a Jubilee Year of Hope, our hope is in Jesus Christ who is risen. And he calls all of us to renew our faith, calls all of us to be friends, brothers and sisters to one another, to support one another, and he says you too must be witnesses to that Gospel message. And for all of you it has touched your lives in a very personal and direct way today. So, we thought at least, in the midst of this pain, that you all experience for the loss of your friend, that at least to have this opportuni-

ty to come together to pray, to renew our faith, and to ask God both for the eternal rest of our sister but also for strengthening and consolation, strengthening of our faith and to be renewed in hope and as Church, as brothers and sisters, we therefore have gathered together for that reason.

So we ask the Lord to be with us, to be with all of you, as you live these days of the pilgrimage of the Jubilee Year of Hope and that you will all also be protected with God's love and God's grace.

The Lord be with you. May the blessing of almighty God come upon you all in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. May God be with you and give peace to your hearts.

**89. PRAYER VIGIL WITH THE YOUNG PEOPLE  
DIALOGUE BETWEEN HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIV  
AND YOUNG PEOPLE DURING THE JUBILEE VIGIL  
Tor Vergata  
Saturday, 2 August 2025**

Question 1 – Friendship

Holy Father, my name is Dulce María, I am 23 years old and I am from Mexico. I come to you as a spokesperson for a reality that young people experience in so many parts of the world. Holy Father, we are children of our time. We live in a culture that shapes us without our realizing it; it is a culture marked by technology, especially by social media. We often get excited about having lots of friends and creating close relationships, but at the same time we increasingly experience different forms of loneliness. We are close and connected to so many people, yet they are not true and lasting relationships, but rather fleeting and often illusory. Holy Father, my question is: how can we find true friendship and genuine love that will lead us to true hope? How can faith help us build our future?

Dear young people, human relationships, our relationships with others are essential for each of us, starting with the fact that all men and women in the world are born as someone's children. Our life begins with a bond, and it is through relationships that we grow. In this process,

culture plays a fundamental role: it is like the lens through which we understand ourselves and interpret the world. Just like a dictionary, every culture contains both words that are noble and words that are vulgar, values and also errors that we must learn to recognize. By passionately searching for the truth, we do not merely receive a culture, but also transform it through the choices we make. Truth, in fact, is a bond that connects words to things and names to faces. Lies, on the other hand, divide these elements and lead to confusion and misunderstanding.

Now, among the many cultural connections that characterize our lives, internet and social media have become “an extraordinary opportunity for dialogue, encounter and exchange between persons, as well as access to information and knowledge” (Francis, *Christus Vivit*, 87). However, these tools are misleading when they are controlled by commercialism and interests that fragment our relationships. In this regard, Pope Francis recalled that sometimes “the whole apparatus of communications, advertising and social networking can be used to lull us, to make us addicted to consumerism” (*Christus Vivit*, 105). It is then that our relationships become confused, restless or unstable. Furthermore, as you know, today there are algorithms that tell us what we should watch, what we should think, and who our friends should be. And so our relationships become confusing, sometimes anxious. When a tool controls someone, that person becomes a tool: a commodity on the market and, in turn, a piece of merchandise. Only genuine relationships and stable connections can build good lives.

Dear young people, every person naturally desires a good life, just as lungs long for air, but how difficult it is to find it! How difficult it is to find true friendship! Centuries ago, Saint Augustine understood the deepest desire of our hearts, the desire of every human heart, even without the technological developments of today. He too had a restless youth, but he did not settle for less, he did not silence the cry of his heart. Augustine sought the truth, the truth that does not disappoint and the beauty that does not fade. And how did he find it? How did he find true friendship and a love capable of giving hope? By finding the one who was already looking for him, by finding Jesus Christ. How did he build his future? By following the one who had always been his friend. In his own words, friendship is nowhere faithful but in Christ. Saint Augustine tells us there is no friendship that is authentic if that is not in Christ. And the true friendship is always in Jesus Christ with truth, love and respect. Only in him can it be eternal and happy (cf. *Against Two Letters of the Pelagians I*, I, 1). The one who loves God in his friend, truly loves his friend (cf. Ser-

mon 336), Saint Augustine tells us. Friendship with Christ, which forms the basis of faith, is not just one aid among many others for building the future; it is our guiding star. According to Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, to live without faith, without a patrimony to defend, without a steady struggle for truth, is not living, but existing (cf. Letters, 27 February 1925). It is when our friendships reflect this intense bond with Jesus that they really become sincere, generous and true.

Dear young people, love one another! Love one another in Christ! Know how to see Jesus in others. Friendship can truly change the world. Friendship is a path to peace.

## Question 2 – The Courage to Choose

Holy Father, my name is Gaia. I am Italian and am 19 years old. Tonight, all of us young people here would like to talk to you about our dreams, hopes and doubts. Holy Father, our years are marked by important decisions as we are faced with choices that will shape our future. However, due to the climate of uncertainty surrounding us, we are tempted to procrastinate, and we are paralyzed by the fear of an uncertain future. We know that choosing means giving something else up and this becomes an obstacle for us. Despite everything, we sense that hope points to achievable goals, even if they are marked by the precariousness of the present moment.

Holy Father, we ask you: where do we find the courage to choose? How can we be courageous and live the adventure of freedom, making radical and meaningful choices?

Thank you for this question. The question is, where can we find the courage to choose and to make wise decisions? To choose is a fundamental human act. Looking at it closely, we realize that it is not just a matter of choosing something, but of choosing someone. When we make a choice, in the strict sense, we decide who we want to become.

The most important choice is the decision about the direction of our life: What kind of man do you want to be? What kind of woman do you want to be? Dear young people, we learn to choose through the trials of life, but above all by remembering that we have been chosen. This reality must be explored and fostered. We received life as a gift, without

choosing it! Our existence did not originate from our decision, but from a love that wanted us. Throughout our lives, those who help us recognize and renew this grace through our choices prove themselves to be our true friends.

Dear young people, you said it well: “choosing means giving something else up and this becomes an obstacle for us.” To be free, we need to start from a stable foundation, from the rock that supports our steps. This rock is a love that precedes us, surprises us and is infinitely greater than us: the love of God. Therefore, before God, choice becomes a judgment that takes nothing away, but always leads to the greatest good.

The courage to choose comes from love, which God shows us in Christ. It is he who loved us with his whole self, saving the world and thus showing us that self-giving is the way to our fulfillment. For this reason, the encounter with Jesus corresponds to the deepest longings of our hearts, because Jesus is God’s love made man.

Twenty-five years ago, right here where we are now, Saint John Paul II spoke on this subject, saying: “It is Jesus in fact that you seek when you dream of happiness; he is waiting for you when nothing else you find satisfies you; he is the beauty to which you are so attracted; it is he who provokes you with that thirst for fullness that will not let you settle for compromise; it is he who urges you to shed the masks of a false life; it is he who reads in your hearts your most genuine choices, the choices that others try to stifle” (Prayer Vigil on the 15th World Youth Day, 19 August 2000). Fear then gives way to hope, because we are certain that God brings to completion what he begins.

We recognize his faithfulness in the words of those who truly love, because they have been truly loved. “You are my life, Lord”: this is what a priest and a consecrated sister say full of joy and in complete freedom, “You are my life, Lord.” “I take you to be my wife and I take you to be my husband”: this is the phrase that transforms the love of a man and a woman into an efficacious sign of God’s love in marriage. These are radical, meaningful choices: Matrimony, Holy Orders, and Consecrated Life. They express the free and liberating gift of self that makes us truly happy. That is where we find happiness, when we learn to give ourselves, to give our lives for others.

These choices give meaning to our lives, transforming them into the image of the perfect love that created them and redeemed them from all

evil, even from death. I say this tonight, thinking of two young women, María, from Spain, who was 20 years old, and Pascale, from Egypt, who was 18 years old. Both chose to come to Rome for the Jubilee of Youth, and both have passed away in these days. Let us together pray for them; let us also pray for their families, friends and communities. May the Risen Jesus receive them into the peace and joy of his Kingdom. And I would also like to ask for your prayers for another friend, a young Spanish man, Ignacio Gonzalez, who was admitted to the “Bambino Gesù” hospital. Let us pray for him and for his health.

Find the courage to make difficult choices and say to Jesus: “You are my life, Lord.” “Lord, You are my life.” Thank you.

### Question 3 – The Call to do Good

Holy Father, my name is Will. I am 20 years old and I am from the United States. I would like to ask you a question on behalf of so many young people out there who yearn, in their hearts, for something deeper. We are drawn to the interior life even if at first glance we are judged as a superficial and thoughtless generation. Deep within ourselves, we feel drawn to the beautiful and the good as sources of truth. The value of silence, as in this Vigil, fascinates us, even if at times it instills fear because of a sense of emptiness. Holy Father, I would like to ask you: how can we truly encounter the Risen Lord in our lives and be sure of his presence even in the midst of trials and uncertainties?

To launch this Jubilee Year, Pope Francis released the document called *Spes non confundit*, which means “hope does not disappoint”. In that document, he wrote: “In the heart of each person, hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come” (*Spes non confundit*, 1). In the Bible, the word “heart” usually refers to a person’s innermost being, which includes our conscience.

Our understanding of what is good, then, reflects how our conscience has been shaped by the people in our lives; those who were kind to us, those who listened to us with love, those who helped us. Those people helped to raise you in goodness and, therefore, to form your conscience to seek the good in your daily choices.

Dear young people, Jesus is the friend who always accompanies us in

the formation of our conscience. If you truly want to encounter the Risen Lord, then listen to his word, which is the Gospel of salvation. Reflect on your way of living, and seek justice in order to build a more humane world. Serve the poor, and so bear witness to the good that we would always like to receive from our neighbours. Be united with Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. Adore Christ in the Blessed Sacrament, the source of eternal life. Study, work and love according to the example of Jesus, the good Teacher who always walks beside us.

As we seek what is good, let us ask him at every step: stay with us, Lord (cf. Lk 24:29). Stay with us, because without you we cannot do the good we desire. You want what our good; indeed Lord you are our good. Those who encounter you also want others to encounter you, because your word is a light brighter than any star, illuminating even the darkest night. Pope Benedict XVI liked to say that those who believe are never alone. In other words, we encounter Christ in the Church, that is, in the communion of those who sincerely seek him.

The Lord himself gathers us together to form a community, not just any community, but a community of believers who support one another. How much the world needs missionaries of the Gospel who are witnesses of justice and peace! How much the future needs men and women who are witnesses of hope! Dear young people, this is the task that the Risen Lord entrusts to each one of us!

Saint Augustine wrote: "You stir us to take pleasure in praising you, because you have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you... Lord, I would seek you... and calling upon you is an act of believing in you" (Confessions, I, 1).

Following those words of Augustine, and in response to your questions, I would like to invite each of you, dear young people, to say to the Lord: "Thank you, Jesus, for calling me. My desire is to remain as one of your friends, so that, embracing you, I may also be a companion on the journey for anyone I meet. Grant, O Lord, that those who meet me may encounter you, even through my limitations and frailties." Through praying these words, our dialogue will continue each time we look at the crucified Lord, for our hearts will be united in him. Each time we adore Christ in the Eucharist, our hearts will be united in him. Finally, my prayer for you is that you may persevere in faith, with joy and courage! And we can say, "Thank you Jesus for loving us." Stay with us Lord.

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Words spoken by the Holy Father at the end of the Vigil:

I would like to thank the choir and the musicians: thank you for accompanying us! Thank you all! Please get some rest. We will meet here tomorrow morning for Holy Mass. Best wishes to you all. Good night!

**90. Letter of the Holy Father  
to the Special Envoy to the Concluding Celebrations  
of the 350th Anniversary of the Apparitions of the Sacred Heart of  
Jesus to Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque  
[Sanctuary of Paray-le-Monial, 27 June 2025]  
(19 June 2025)**

To our venerable Brother  
FRANCISCO JAVIER, Cardinal BUSTILLO, O.F.M. Conv.,  
Bishop of Ajaccio

“To that Heart which has so loved men, sparing nothing until It was utterly consumed, in order to show them Its love” (Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque, Autobiography, 92).

These words summarize the essential message transmitted to us through the apparitions at Paray-le-Monial to Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque, which took place between the end of December 1673 and June 1675. A message that continues to draw the faithful from all over the world, called to grow in encounter with Christ, with the help of absolute trust, until attaining full and total union with the Lord (cf. Francis, *Dilexit nos*, 119-122).

Therefore, in the Sanctuary of Paray-le-Monial, in the Diocese of Autun, notable custodian and promoter of devotion to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, a Jubilee was convoked, from 27 December 2023 to 29 June of the present year, on the occasion of the 350th anniversary of those events of grace, in order to make grateful memory of them. May this celebration reach not only the beloved ecclesial community, but also the whole Church, in the context of the Holy Year and as we commemorate the 1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, which proclaimed the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father. May all be able to experience salvation and communion with God.

It was known, therefore, from the very first steps of our pontificate entrusted to the Lord, that principal acts would be celebrated within this Jubilee. For this reason, the venerable brothers Benoît Rivière, Bishop of Autun, and Éric de Moulins-Beaufort, Metropolitan Archbishop of Reims and President of the French Episcopal Conference, cordially requested of our beloved predecessor, Pope Francis, that he might send a distinguished prelate to represent the Roman Pontiff at Paray-le-Monial and there preside at the Eucharistic celebration that would conclude the Jubilee Year.

We, desiring to fulfill gladly the wish of our predecessor, appoint you, our venerable Brother, by means of this letter, as our Extraordinary Envoy to the solemnities of the 350th Jubilee to be held on the forthcoming 27 June, on the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, in Paray-le-Monial. You know that region well: first as Provincial Custodian of your Order in France, and later as episcopal delegate at the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes, where you won great esteem and where your experience in cultivating both human and divine life, as well as in pastoral action, has been widely recognized.

We therefore entrust you with presiding in our name over this important mission and with communicating to priests, consecrated persons, lay faithful, and civil authorities our pastoral sentiments and closeness, fully meeting the expectations of all. As befits the occasion, you will preside at the Eucharistic celebration, in which you will proclaim the unfathomable riches of the Heart of Christ, from which flow rivers of living water to heal the wounds we suffer, so that together we may advance toward a more just, united, and fraternal world.

While we entrust your mission, venerable Brother, to the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Good Counsel, we gladly impart our Apostolic Blessing, bearer of heavenly graces, which we desire to extend to all who will take part in this celebration.

From the Vatican, 19 June, Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, Holy Year 2025, the first of our pontificate.

LEO PP. XIV

**91. Letter of the Holy Father  
to the Special Envoy to the Celebrations of the 400th Anniversary of  
the Apparitions of Saint Anne in Auray  
[25–26 July 2025]  
(25 June 2025)**

To our venerable Brother

ROBERT SARAH, Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church,  
Prefect emeritus of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Disci-  
pline of the Sacraments

The Most High deigns to reveal the ineffable mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven especially to the little ones (cf. Mt 11:25-26). Thus, by the grace of God, Saint Anne, sweetest mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary, miraculously appeared to the farmer Yves Nicolazic, so that the faith of the people of Brittany might be enkindled with renewed spiritual ardor. A small chapel was built which, by the frequent influx of devotees, became an important shrine dedicated to Saint Anne of Auray, and in time a place greatly desired by countless pilgrims. Finally, on a radiant day of September in the year 1996, there also arrived there — to encourage the faith, hope, and charity of families — our predecessor Saint John Paul II.

Therefore, taking advantage of the happy occasion of the 400th anniversary of the apparitions of Saint Anne in the locality of Sainte-Anne-d’Auray, which will be celebrated in the coming month of July, the venerable Brother Raymond Centène, Bishop of Vannes, cordially requested of Pope Francis — now of happy memory — that he designate a distinguished cardinal to preside, in the name of the Supreme Pontiff, over the commemorative celebrations of Saint Anne and to offer words of spiritual encouragement. Wishing to grant such a pious request, and confirming the designation expressly made by our beloved predecessor of happy memory, we turn to you, venerable Brother, who are distinguished for your piety and wisdom, and who are a tireless and diligent laborer in the vineyard of the Lord.

Therefore, by means of this letter, we appoint you as our Extraordinary Envoy for the above-mentioned celebrations, which will take place on the 25th and 26th of the coming month of July, in memory of Saint Anne, in the locality of Sainte-Anne-d’Auray, and which will be carried out with the proper rite.

You shall exhort all participants in this event that, with renewed strength and new enthusiasm, they may keep alive the hope in God's promises, knowing that this Jubilee has granted them abundant spiritual benefits and graces of heavenly goodness, which will surely be of great help in their daily endeavors.

You shall greet in our name the Bishop of the Diocese of Vannes, all the faithful gathered there, the venerable prelates, priests, religious men and women, civil authorities, and Christian laity, conveying to them our benevolence.

We ourselves, venerable Brother, will accompany you with our prayer in the fulfillment of your mission, invoking the intercession of Saint Anne and of her incomparable Daughter, the Blessed Virgin Mary. And we already gladly impart our Apostolic Blessing, a sign of our benevolence toward you and a pledge of heavenly gifts, which we desire you extend to all participants in these celebrations.

From the Vatican, 25 June, Holy Year 2025, the first of our pontificate.

LEO PP. XIV

**92. Letter of the Holy Father  
to the Special Envoy to the Celebration of the Centenary  
of the Archdiocese of Rijeka (Croatia)  
[14 June 2025]  
(29 May 2025)**

To our venerable Brother

MATTEO MARIA ZUPPI, Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church,  
Metropolitan Archbishop of Bologna,  
President of the Italian Episcopal Conference

He who prepares, with living and chosen stones, an eternal dwelling for His glory, has also deigned to call the Church His Bride (cf. 1 Pet 2:5), so that, as a people consecrated to the name of Jesus and in constant building toward the heavenly Jerusalem, she may grow unceasingly until she attains the eternal promises through the imitation of Christ. In this visible house, which God permits us to build each day, the mystery of His communion with us is wondrously represented and fulfilled: therein, the

Church spread throughout the whole earth is built up as the Body of the Lord until she reaches the fullness of the vision of peace. Truly, she is the anchor of hope in our time, founded upon the foundation of the Apostles and with Christ Jesus Himself as the cornerstone.

Considering all this, we rejoice at the celebrations with which the clergy and faithful of the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Rijeka (Croatia) will give thanks to God on the feast of the centenary of the foundation of their community, erected by the Letters of our predecessor Pius XI, of happy memory, entitled *Supremum pastorale munus*, dated 25 April 1925.

At the beginning of our ministry as Pastor of the Universal Church, we wish to turn our thoughts to the beloved Church of Rijeka, especially since her Metropolitan Archbishop, our venerable Brother Mate Uzinić, kindly requested of our beloved predecessor Pope Francis, of happy memory, that he send a cardinal to represent him in Rijeka and to preside there over the Eucharistic celebration.

Therefore, desiring to carry out gladly the will of our predecessor, we hereby confirm you, by means of this letter, as our Extraordinary Envoy for the principal celebration, which will take place on the eve of the solemnity of Saint Vitus, martyr and glorious patron of the Church of Rijeka, that is, on the coming 14th of June, on the occasion of the centenary of the foundation of that ecclesial community.

In this Holy Year which the entire Church celebrates, you shall exhort all participants that, just as all creation is naturally ordered to its Creator, so too they may freely turn to Him who is the supreme truth and the highest good. You shall greet in our name the Metropolitan Archbishop of Rijeka, the other bishops present, the priests, religious men and women, and all the lay faithful. We also desire that the words of our benevolence reach the civil authorities and all participants.

Finally, we raise fervent prayer to Almighty God, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Trsat and of Saint Vitus, martyr, that you may diligently fulfill the mission entrusted to you, and that all who take part in this anniversary may be abundantly graced by the Lord. May this our Apostolic Blessing be a bearer of true heavenly gifts and an expression of our benevolence toward you, venerable Brother, which we wish to be extended also to all those gathered.

From the Vatican, 29 May, Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord, Holy

Year 2025, the first of our pontificate.

LEO PP. XIV

**93. Letter of the Holy Father  
to the Special Envoy to the Celebrations of the 950th  
Anniversary of the Diocese of Płock (Poland)  
[7 June 2025]  
(16 May 2025)**

To our venerable Brother

LADISLAUS NÉMET, Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church, S.V.D.  
Metropolitan Archbishop of Belgrade

The diocesan community of Płock, founded in the year 1075 by the will of our predecessor Saint Gregory VII, attentive to the pastoral needs of his time, celebrates with gratitude both the Holy Year together with the whole universal Church and the 950th anniversary of its foundation. That illustrious Pontiff then sent his legates to the Polish prince Boleslaus II, entrusting them with the mission of organizing the ecclesiastical structure in the territory of the young Polish state, which had received holy Baptism more than a century earlier. The diocese, then called Mazovia, encompassed a vast region in which, over the centuries, many other particular Churches were subsequently established.

The Church of Płock, one of the most ancient episcopal sees of Poland, has distinguished itself by the firmness of its faith, the holiness of life of many of its pastors and faithful, and by its love for the universal Church. That beloved land of Mazovia witnessed the life and mission of Saint Stanislaus Kostka, patron of children and youth; of Saint Faustina Kowalska, great apostle of Divine Mercy; and of the Blessed Bishops Antoni Julian Nowowiejski and Leon Wetmański, martyrs of the Second World War.

Another illustrious predecessor of ours, Saint John Paul II, visited Płock in June 1991; he solemnly celebrated Holy Mass in the square near the stadium, addressed words of consolation to those deprived of freedom, and presided over the rite of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the ancient cathedral, beautifully situated on the banks of the River Vistula.

It has come to our knowledge that, at the beginning of our pontificate

with full confidence in the Lord, the Church of Płock is preparing to celebrate the principal acts of this jubilee. For this reason, the venerable Brother Szymon Stułkowski, Bishop of Płock, kindly requested of Pope Francis — of happy memory — that he send an eminent pastor to represent him in Płock and to manifest the affection of the Roman Pontiff for that community.

Desiring gladly to fulfill the will of our predecessor, we hereby confirm you, by means of this letter, as our Extraordinary Envoy for the celebration of the 950th anniversary of the foundation of the Diocese of Płock, which will take place on the coming 7th of June.

You shall preside over the solemn Eucharistic celebration and you shall greet, in our name, the Bishop of Płock, the other prelates present, the priests, religious men and women, the civil authorities, and all the faithful gathered. With your word, you shall exhort all present to a deeper imitation of the life of Christ in daily living, to love for the Gospel and the Church, and to prayer for vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life. Each one, conscious of his or her own vocation, recalling the words of Saint Stanislaus Kostka: “I was born for greater things”, must bear witness — even in these difficult times — to the beauty of the Christian life.

For our part, we accompany you with our prayers in the fulfillment of your mission, and we gladly grant our Apostolic Blessing, as a sign of our benevolence toward you and as a pledge of heavenly gifts, which we desire you to extend to all the participants in the celebration.

From the Vatican, 16 May, on the feast of Saint Andrew Bobola, Patron of Poland, Holy Year 2025, the first of our pontificate.

LEO PP. XIV

**94. To the Teachers of Catholic Schools of Ireland, England, Wales, and Scotland; and to the Young People of the Diocese of Copenhagen [5 July 2025]**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Peace be with you!

Good morning and welcome to the Vatican.

Excellencies,  
Dear priests,  
and young friends,

It is with joy that I greet you all on the occasion of your pilgrimage to Rome in this Jubilee Year which, as you know, is centered on the theological virtue of hope. In particular, I warmly welcome the young people of the Diocese of Copenhagen — who form part of this group — as well as the teachers who have come from Ireland, England, Wales, and Scotland.

You are following in the footsteps of countless pilgrims from your countries who, over the centuries, made this same pilgrimage to Rome, the “Eternal City.” Indeed, for Christians, Rome has always been a special home, for it is the place where the Apostles Peter and Paul bore the supreme witness of their love for Jesus by giving their lives as martyrs. As the Successor of Peter, I wish to express my gratitude for your presence here, and I pray that, as you visit the various holy sites, you may find inspiration and hope in the profound example of how the saints and martyrs imitated Christ.

Pilgrimage plays a vital role in our life of faith, because it takes us away from our homes and daily routines and offers us time and space to encounter God more deeply. Such moments always help us to grow, for it is through them that the Holy Spirit gently shapes us so that we may become ever more conformed to the mind and heart of Jesus Christ.

In a particular way, dear brothers and sisters, young people gathered with us this morning, remember that God created each one of you with a purpose and a mission in life. Take advantage, therefore, of this opportunity to listen, to pray, so that you may perceive more clearly the voice of God who calls you from the depths of your hearts. I would add that today, too often, we have lost the capacity to listen, to truly listen. We listen to music, our ears are constantly exposed to every kind of digital stimulus, but sometimes we forget to listen to our own hearts. And it is in the heart that God speaks to us, where He calls us and invites us to know Him more deeply and to live in His love. And through this listening, you will be able to open your inner selves so as to allow the grace of God to strengthen your faith in Jesus (cf. Col 2:7), making it easier to share this gift with others.

And to you, dear teachers: what I have just said to the young people also

applies to you, especially given your important role in the formation of new generations — children, adolescents, and young adults. Indeed, they will look to you as models: models of life, models of faith. They will observe, above all, how you teach and how you live. I hope that you will daily nourish your relationship with Christ, who offers us the model of authentic teaching (cf. Mt 7:28), so that you too may guide and inspire those entrusted to your care to follow Christ in their own lives.

Finally, when you return home, remember that a pilgrimage never truly ends, but rather shifts its focus to the “pilgrimage of discipleship” in daily life. We are all pilgrims and always will be, journeying as we seek to follow the Lord and to find our own path in life. This is surely not easy, but with the Lord’s help, the intercession of the saints, and mutual support, you can be confident that, as long as you remain faithful and always trust in the mercy of God, the experience of this pilgrimage will continue to bear fruit throughout your lives (cf. Jn 15:16).

Dear friends, with these brief words, and entrusting you to the intercession of Mary, Mother of the Church, I am pleased to impart to you my heartfelt blessing.

May God bless you, and thank you very much.

### **95. To the Catechumens and Neophytes of France [29 July 2025]**

Dear brothers and sisters,  
peace be with you.

Early this morning I received the sad news that one of your companions, who was traveling with you on pilgrimage — your fellow traveler, your sister — passed away unexpectedly last night, if I am not mistaken.

And, naturally, the sadness that death brings is something profoundly human and very understandable, especially when one is so far from home and at a time like this, when we have gathered to celebrate our faith with joy. And suddenly, we are strongly reminded that our life is not superficial, that we do not have control over it, and that — as Jesus Himself says — we know neither the day nor the hour when our ear-

thly life will end.

But we also learn in the Gospel what Martha and Mary discovered when their brother Lazarus died, and Jesus was not with them at first, arriving several days after his death. They came to understand that Jesus is the life and the resurrection.

Therefore, in a certain way, as we celebrate this Jubilee Year of Hope, we are powerfully reminded of how much we need our faith in Jesus Christ to be part of who we are, of how we live, of how we value and respect others, and especially of how we continue forward even through such painful experiences.

Saint Augustine tells us that, when someone dies, it is very human and natural to weep, to feel sorrow, to feel the loss of someone dear. Yet he also says: do not weep as the pagans do, for we too have seen Jesus Christ die on the cross and rise again from the dead.

And it is our hope in the resurrection that is the ultimate source of our hope. When we speak of a Jubilee Year of Hope, our hope is in the Risen Jesus Christ. He calls all of us to renew our faith, to be friends, brothers, and sisters to one another, to support each other. And He tells us that we must also be witnesses of this message of the Gospel.

For all of you, this has touched your lives today in a very personal and direct way. That is why we think that, at least in the midst of the pain you feel at the loss of your friend, you might have this opportunity to gather together to pray, to renew your faith, and to ask God both for the eternal rest of your sister and for strength and consolation: strength for your faith and renewal in hope. And as Church, as brothers and sisters, this is why we gather together.

Let us ask the Lord to be with us, to be with each one of you during these days of pilgrimage in the Jubilee Year of Hope, and that all may be protected by the love and grace of God.

The Lord be with you.

May the blessing of Almighty God come down upon you, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

May God be with you and grant peace to your hearts.

**96. Meeting with the Members of the Ordinary Council  
of the General Secretariat of the Synod  
[26 June 2025]**

Dearest brothers,

It is with joy that I greet you on the occasion of the meeting of the Ordinary Council of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops.

Although it is not possible for me to remain with you throughout the entire afternoon, I gladly take this opportunity to share one idea that I consider central, and then to listen to you for the time that is available to me.

Pope Francis has given a new impetus to the Synod of Bishops, inspired, as he has said on various occasions, by Saint Paul VI. And the legacy he has left us seems to me above all this: synodality is a style, an attitude that helps us to be Church, fostering authentic experiences of participation and communion.

During his pontificate, Pope Francis developed this vision in the different Synodal Assemblies, especially those dedicated to the family, and then brought it to its full expression in the most recent journey, dedicated precisely to synodality.

The Synod of Bishops naturally retains its institutional character and, at the same time, is enriched by the fruits that have matured in this stage. You are the body entrusted with gathering these fruits and reflecting on them with a forward-looking perspective. I encourage you in this task, I pray that it may be fruitful, and I thank you in advance.

**97. MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS  
POPE LEO XIV  
FOR THE 10th WORLD DAY OF PRAYER  
FOR THE CARE OF CREATION 2025  
[1 September 2025]**

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

The theme of this World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, chosen by our beloved Pope Francis, is “Seeds of Peace and Hope”. On the tenth anniversary of the establishment of this Day of Prayer, which coincided

with the publication of the Encyclical *Laudato Si'*, we find ourselves celebrating the present Jubilee as “Pilgrims of Hope.” This year’s theme thus appears most timely.

In proclaiming the Kingdom of God, Jesus often used the image of the seed. As the time of his Passion drew near, he applied that image to himself, comparing himself to the grain of wheat that must die in order to bear fruit (cf. Jn 12:24). Seeds are buried in the earth, and there, to our wonder, life springs up, even in the most unexpected places, pointing to the promise of new beginnings. We can think, for example, of flowers springing up on our roadsides from seeds that landed up there almost by chance. As those flowers grow, they brighten the gray tarmac and even manage to break through its hard surface.

In Christ, we too are seeds, and indeed, “seeds of peace and hope.” The prophet Isaiah tells us that the Spirit of God can make an arid and parched desert into a garden, a place of rest and serenity. In his words, “a spirit from on high will be poured out on us, and the wilderness will become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field a forest. Then justice will dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness abide in the fruitful field. The work of righteousness will be peace, and the work of righteousness, quietness and trust forever. My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places” (Is 32:15-18).

These words of the prophet will accompany the “Season of Creation,” an ecumenical initiative to be celebrated from 1 September to 4 October 2025. They remind us that, together with prayer, determination and concrete actions are necessary if this “caress of God” is to become visible to our world (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 84). The prophet contrasts justice and law with the desolation of the desert. His message is extraordinarily timely, given the evidence in various parts of the world that our earth is being ravaged. On all sides, injustice, violations of international law and the rights of peoples, grave inequalities and the greed that fuels them are spawning deforestation, pollution and the loss of biodiversity. Extreme natural phenomena caused by climate changes provoked by human activity are growing in intensity and frequency (cf. *Laudato Deum*, 5), to say nothing of the medium and long-term effects of the human and ecological devastation being wrought by armed conflicts.

As yet, we seem incapable of recognizing that the destruction of nature does not affect everyone in the same way. When justice and peace are trampled underfoot, those who are most hurt are the poor, the margi-

nalized and the excluded. The suffering of indigenous communities is emblematic in this regard.

That is not all. Nature itself is reduced at times to a bargaining chip, a commodity to be bartered for economic or political gain. As a result, God's creation turns into a battleground for the control of vital resources. We see this in agricultural areas and forests peppered with landmines, "scorched earth" policies, [1] conflicts over water sources, and the unequal distribution of raw materials, which penalizes the poorer nations and undermines social stability itself.

These various wounds are the effect of sin. This is surely not what God had in mind when he entrusted the earth to the men and women whom he created in his image (cf. Gen 1:24-29). The Bible provides no justification for us to exercise "tyranny over creation" (*Laudato Si'*, 200). On the contrary, "the biblical texts are to be read in their context, with an appropriate hermeneutic, recognizing that they tell us to 'till and keep' the garden of the world [cf. Gen 2:15]. 'Tilling' refers to cultivating, ploughing or working, while 'keeping' means caring, protecting, overseeing and preserving. This implies a relationship of mutual responsibility between human beings and nature" (*ibid.*, 67).

Environmental justice – implicitly proclaimed by the prophets – can no longer be regarded as an abstract concept or a distant goal. It is an urgent need that involves much more than simply protecting the environment. For it is a matter of justice – social, economic and human. For believers it is also a duty born of faith, since the universe reflects the face of Jesus Christ, in whom all things were created and redeemed. In a world where the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters are the first to suffer the devastating effects of climate change, deforestation and pollution, care for creation becomes an expression of our faith and humanity.

Now is the time to follow words with deeds. "Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience" (*Laudato Si'*, 217). By working with love and perseverance, we can sow many seeds of justice and thus contribute to the growth of peace and the renewal of hope. It may well take years for this plant to bear its first fruits, years that, for their part, involve an entire ecosystem made up of continuity, fidelity, cooperation and love, especially if that love mirrors the Lord's own self-sacrificing Love.

Among the Church's initiatives that are like seeds sown in this field, I would mention the Borgo Laudato Si' project that Pope Francis bequeathed to us at Castel Gandolfo. It is a seed that promises to bear fruits of justice and peace, and an educational project in integral ecology that can serve as an example of how people can live, work and build community by applying the principles of the Encyclical Laudato Si'.

I pray that Almighty God will send us in abundance his "Spirit from on high" (Is 32:15), so that these seeds, and others like them, may bring forth an abundant harvest of peace and hope.

The Encyclical Laudato Si' has now guided the Catholic Church and many people of good will for ten years. May it continue to inspire us and may integral ecology be increasingly accepted as the right path to follow. In this way, seeds of hope will multiply, to be "tilled and kept" by the grace of our great and unfailing Hope, who is the risen Christ. In his name, I offer all of you my blessing.

From the Vatican, 30 June 2025

Memorial of the First Martyrs of Holy Roman Church

**98. MESSAGE OF THE HOLY FATHER  
FOR THE 5th WORLD DAY FOR GRANDPARENTS  
AND THE ELDERLY 2025  
[27 July 2025]**

Dear brothers and sisters,

The Jubilee we are now celebrating helps us to realize that hope is a constant source of joy, whatever our age. When that hope has also been tempered by fire over the course of a long life, it proves a source of deep happiness.

Sacred Scripture offers us many examples of men and women whom the Lord called late in life to play a part in his saving plan. We can think of Abraham and Sarah, who, advanced in years, found it hard to believe when God promised them a child. Their childlessness seemed to prevent them from any hope for the future.

Zechariah's reaction to the news of John the Baptist's birth was no different: "How can this be? I am an old man and my wife is advanced in years" (Lk 1:18). Old age, barrenness and physical decline apparently blocked any hope for life and fertility in these men and women. The question that Nicodemus asked Jesus when the Master spoke to him of being "born again" also seems purely rhetorical: "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" (Jn 3:4). Yet whenever we think that things cannot change, the Lord surprises us with an act of saving power.

### The elderly as signs of hope

In the Bible, God repeatedly demonstrates his providential care by turning to people in their later years. This was the case not only with Abraham, Sarah, Zechariah and Elizabeth, but also with Moses, who was called to set his people free when he was already eighty years old (cf. Ex 7:7). God thus teaches us that, in his eyes, old age is a time of blessing and grace, and that the elderly are, for him, the first witnesses of hope. Augustine asks, "What do we mean by old age?" He tells us that God himself answers the question: "Let your strength fail, so that my strength may abide within you, and you can say with the Apostle, 'When I am weak, then I am strong'" (Super Ps. 70,11). The increasing number of elderly people is a sign of the times that we are called to discern, in order to interpret properly this moment of history.

The life of the Church and the world can only be understood in light of the passage of generations. Embracing the elderly helps us to understand that life is more than just the present moment, and should not be wasted in superficial encounters and fleeting relationships. Instead, life is constantly pointing us toward the future. In the book of Genesis, we find the moving episode of the blessing given by the aged Jacob to his grandchildren, the sons of Joseph; his words are an appeal to look to the future with hope, as the time when God's promises will be fulfilled (cf. Gen 48:8-20). If it is true that the weakness of the elderly needs the strength of the young, it is equally true that the inexperience of the young needs the witness of the elderly in order to build the future with wisdom. How often our grandparents have been for us examples of faith and devotion, civic virtue and social commitment, memory and perseverance amid trials! The precious legacy that they have handed down to us with hope and love will always be a source of gratitude and a summons to perseverance.

## Signs of hope for the elderly

From biblical times, the Jubilee has been understood as a time of liberation. Slaves were freed, debts were forgiven and land was returned to its original owners. The Jubilee was a time when the social order willed by God was restored, and inequalities and injustices accumulated over the years were remedied. Jesus evoked those moments of liberation when, in the synagogue of Nazareth, he proclaimed good news to the poor, sight to the blind and freedom for prisoners and the oppressed (cf. Lk 4:16-21).

Looking at the elderly in the spirit of this Jubilee, we are called to help them experience liberation, especially from loneliness and abandonment. This year is a fitting time to do so. God's fidelity to his promises teaches us that there is a blessedness in old age, an authentic evangelical joy inspiring us to break through the barriers of indifference in which the elderly often find themselves enclosed. Our societies, everywhere in the world, are growing all too accustomed to letting this significant and enriching part of their life be marginalized and forgotten.

Given this situation, a change of pace is needed that would be readily seen in an assumption of responsibility on the part of the whole Church. Every parish, association and ecclesial group is called to become a protagonist in a "revolution" of gratitude and care, to be brought about by regular visits to the elderly, the creation of networks of support and prayer for them and with them, and the forging of relationships that can restore hope and dignity to those who feel forgotten. Christian hope always urges us to be more daring, to think big, to be dissatisfied with things the way they are. In this case, it urges us to work for a change that can restore the esteem and affection to which the elderly are entitled

That is why Pope Francis wanted the World Day of Grandparents and the Elderly to be celebrated primarily through an effort to seek out elderly persons who are living alone. For this reason, those who are unable to come to Rome on pilgrimage during this Holy Year may "obtain the Jubilee Indulgence if they visit, for an appropriate amount of time, the elderly who are alone... making, in a sense, a pilgrimage to Christ present in them (cf. Mt 25:34-36)" (APOSTOLIC PENITENTIARY, Norms for the Granting of the Jubilee Indulgence, III). Visiting an elderly person is a way of encountering Jesus, who frees us from indifference and loneliness.

As elderly persons, we can hope

The Book of Sirach calls blessed those who have not lost hope (cf. 14:2). Perhaps, especially if our lives are long, we may be tempted to look not to the future but to the past. Yet, as Pope Francis wrote during his last hospitalization, “our bodies are weak, but even so, nothing can prevent us from loving, praying, giving ourselves, being there for one another, in faith, as shining signs of hope” (Angelus, 16 March 2025). We possess a freedom that no difficulty can rob us of: it is the freedom to love and to pray. Everyone, always, can love and pray.

Our affection for our loved ones – for the wife or husband with whom we have spent so much of our lives, for our children, for our grandchildren who brighten our days – does not fade when our strength wanes. Indeed, their own affection often revives our energy and brings us hope and comfort.

These signs of living love, which have their roots in God himself, give us courage and remind us that “even if our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day” (2 Cor 4:16). Especially as we grow older, let us press forward with confidence in the Lord. May we be renewed each day by our encounter with him in prayer and in Holy Mass. Let us lovingly pass on the faith we have lived for so many years, in our families and in our daily encounter with others. May we always praise God for his goodness, cultivate unity with our loved ones, open our hearts to those who are far away and, in particular, to all those in need. In this way, we will be signs of hope, whatever our age.

From the Vatican, 26 June 2025

LEO PP. XIV

**99. MESSAGE OF POPE LEO XIV  
FOR THE 111th WORLD DAY OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES 2025  
[4-5 Octobre 2025]**

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

The 111th World Day of Migrants and Refugees, which my predecessor chose to coincide with the Jubilees of Migrants and of the Missions, offers us an opportunity to reflect on the connections between hope, migration and mission.

The current global context is sadly marked by wars, violence, injustice and extreme weather events, which force millions of people to leave their homelands in search of refuge elsewhere. The widespread tendency to look after the interests of limited communities poses a serious threat to the sharing of responsibility, multilateral cooperation, the pursuit of the common good and global solidarity for the benefit of our entire human family. The prospect of a renewed arms race and the development of new armaments, including nuclear weapons, the lack of consideration for the harmful effects of the ongoing climate crisis, and the impact of profound economic inequalities make the challenges of the present and the future increasingly demanding.

Faced with frightening scenarios and the possibility of global devastation, it is important that there be a growing desire in people's hearts for a future of peace and of respect for the dignity of all. Such a future is essential to God's plan for humanity and the rest of creation. This is the messianic future anticipated by the prophets: "Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand because of their great age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets... For there shall be a sowing of peace; the vine shall yield its fruit, the ground shall give its produce, and the skies shall give their dew" (Zech 8:4-5, 12). This future has already begun, since it was inaugurated by Jesus Christ (cf. Mk 1:15; Lk 17:21), and we believe and hope in its full realization, for the Lord is always faithful to his promises.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches: "The virtue of hope responds to the aspiration to happiness which God has placed in the heart of every man and woman; it takes up the hopes that inspire human activities" (N. 1818). What is more, the search for happiness, and the prospect of finding it beyond one's place of origin, is certainly one of the main motivations for the movement of people today.

This link between migration and hope is clearly evident in many contemporary experiences of migration. Many migrants, refugees and displaced persons are privileged witnesses of hope. Indeed, they demonstrate this daily through their resilience and trust in God, as they face adversity while seeking a future in which they glimpse that integral human development and happiness are possible. Moreover, we can see the itinerant experience of the people of Israel repeated in their own lives: "O God, when you went out before your people, when you marched through the wilderness, the earth quaked, the heavens poured down rain at the pre-

sence of God, the God of Sinai, at the presence of God, the God of Israel. Rain in abundance, O God, you showered abroad; you restored your heritage when it languished; your flock found a dwelling in it; in your goodness, O God, you provided for the needy” (Ps 68:7-10).

In a world darkened by war and injustice, even when all seems lost, migrants and refugees stand as messengers of hope. Their courage and tenacity bear heroic testimony to a faith that sees beyond what our eyes can see and gives them the strength to defy death on the various contemporary migration routes. Here too we can find a clear analogy with the experience of the people of Israel wandering in the desert, who faced every danger while trusting in the Lord’s protection: “he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence; he will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler. You will not fear the terror of the night, or the arrow that flies by day, or the pestilence that stalks in darkness, or the destruction that wastes at noonday” (Ps 91:3-6).

Migrants and refugees remind the Church of her pilgrim dimension, perpetually journeying towards her final homeland, sustained by a hope that is a theological virtue. Each time the Church gives in to the temptation of “sedentarization” and ceases to be a *civitas peregrine*, God’s people journeying towards the heavenly homeland (cf. Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, Books XIV-XVI), she ceases to be “in the world” and becomes “of the world” (cf. Jn 15:19). This temptation was already present in the early Christian communities, so much so that the Apostle Paul had to remind the Church of Philippi that “our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself” (Phil 3:20-21).

In a special way, Catholic migrants and refugees can become missionaries of hope in the countries that welcome them, forging new paths of faith where the message of Jesus Christ has not yet arrived or initiating interreligious dialogue based on everyday life and the search for common values. With their spiritual enthusiasm and vitality, they can help revitalize ecclesial communities that have become rigid and weighed down, where spiritual desertification is advancing at an alarming rate. Their presence, then, should be recognized and appreciated as a true divine blessing, an opportunity to open oneself to the grace of God, who gives new energy and hope to his Church: “Do not neglect to show hos-

pitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it” (Heb 13:2).

The first element of evangelization, as Saint Paul VI emphasized, is that of witness: “All Christians are called to this witness, and in this way they can be real evangelizers. We are thinking especially of the responsibility incumbent on migrants in the country that receives them” (Evangelii Nuntiandi, 21). This is a true *missio migrantium*, a mission carried out by migrants, for which adequate preparation and ongoing support must be ensured through effective inter-ecclesial cooperation.

At the same time, the communities that welcome them can also be a living witness to hope, one that is understood as the promise of a present and a future where the dignity of all as children of God is recognized. In this way, migrants and refugees are recognized as brothers and sisters, part of a family in which they can express their talents and participate fully in community life.

On this Jubilee, when the Church prays for all migrants and refugees, I wish to entrust all those who are on the journey, as well as those who are working to accompany them, to the maternal protection of the Virgin Mary, comfort of migrants, so that she may keep hope alive in their hearts and sustain them in their commitment to building a world that increasingly resembles the Kingdom of God, the true homeland that awaits us at the end of our journey.

From the Vatican, 25 July 2025  
Feast of Saint James, Apostle

LEO PP. XIV

**100. MESSAGE OF THE HOLY FATHER FOR THE 9th  
WORLD DAY OF THE POOR  
33rd Sunday of Ordinary Time  
16 November 2025**

You are my hope (cf. Ps 71:5)

1. “You, O Lord, are my hope” (Ps 71:5). These words well up from a heart

burdened by grave hardship: “You have made me see many troubles and calamities” (v. 20), the Psalmist exclaims. At the same time, his heart remains open and confident; steadfast in faith, he acknowledges the support of God, whom he calls “a rock of refuge, a strong fortress” (v. 3). Hence, his abiding trust that hope in God never disappoints: “In you, Lord, I take refuge; I shall never be put to shame” (v. 1).

Amid life’s trials, our hope is inspired by the firm and reassuring certainty of God’s love, poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. That hope does not disappoint (cf. Rom 5:5). Thus Saint Paul could write to Timothy: “To this end we toil and struggle, because we have our hope set on the living God” (1 Tim 4:10). The living God is in fact “the God of hope” (Rom 15:13), and Christ, by his death and resurrection, has himself become “our hope” (1 Tim 1:1). We must never forget that we were saved in this hope, and need to remain firmly rooted therein.

2. The poor can be witnesses to a strong and steadfast hope, precisely because they embody it in the midst of uncertainty, poverty, instability and marginalization. They cannot rely on the security of power and possessions; on the contrary, they are at their mercy and often victims of them. Their hope must necessarily be sought elsewhere. By recognizing that God is our first and only hope, we too pass from fleeting hopes to a lasting hope. Once we desire that God accompany us on the journey of life, material wealth becomes relativized, for we discover the real treasure that we need. The words that the Lord Jesus spoke to his disciples remain forceful and clear: “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consume and where thieves do not break in and steal” (Mt 6:19-20).

3. The gravest form of poverty is not to know God. As Pope Francis wrote in *Evangelii Gaudium*: “The worst discrimination which the poor suffer is the lack of spiritual care. The great majority of the poor have a special openness to the faith; they need God and we must not fail to offer them his friendship, his blessing, his word, the celebration of the sacraments and a journey of growth and maturity in the faith” (No. 2000). Here we see a basic and essential awareness of how we can find our treasure in God. As the Apostle John insists: “If anyone says, ‘I love God,’ but hates his brother, he is a liar; for whoever does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen” (1 Jn 4:20).

This is a rule of faith and the secret of hope: all this earth's goods, material realities, worldly pleasures, economic prosperity, however important, cannot bring happiness to our hearts. Wealth often disappoints and can lead to tragic situations of poverty — above all the poverty born of the failure to recognize our need for God and of the attempt to live without him. A saying of Saint Augustine comes to mind: “Let all your hope be in God: feel your need for him, and let him fill that need. Without him, whatever you possess will only make you all the more empty” (Enarr. in Ps., 85:3).

4. The word of God tells us that Christian hope is certainty at every step of life's journey, since it does not depend not on our human strength but upon the promise of God, who is always faithful. For this reason, from the beginning, Christians have identified hope with the symbol of the anchor, which provides stability and security. Christian hope is like an anchor that grounds our hearts in the promise of the Lord Jesus, who saved us by his death and resurrection and will come again among us. This hope continues to point us toward the “new heavens” and the “new earth” (2 Pet 3:13) as the true horizon of our existence, where every life will find its authentic meaning, for our real homeland is in heaven (cf. Phil 3:20).

The city of God, therefore, impels us to improve the cities of men and women. Our own cities must begin to resemble his. Hope, sustained by God's love poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit (cf. Rom 5:5), turns human hearts into fertile soil where charity for the life of the world can blossom. The Church's tradition has constantly insisted on the circular relationship between the three theological virtues of faith, hope and charity. Hope is born of faith, which nourishes and sustains it on the foundation of charity, the mother of all virtues. All of us need charity, here and now. Charity is not just a promise; it is a present reality to be embraced with joy and responsibility. Charity engages us and guides our decisions towards the common good. Conversely, those who lack charity not only lack faith and hope; they also rob their neighbors of hope.

5. The biblical summons to hope thus entails the duty to shoulder our responsibilities in history, without hesitation. Charity, in fact, “is the greatest social commandment” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 1889). Poverty has structural causes that must be addressed and eliminated. In the meantime, each of us is called to offer new signs of hope that will bear witness to Christian charity, just as many saints have done over the centuries. Hospitals and schools, for instance, were institutions establi-

shed to reach out to the most vulnerable and marginalized. These institutions should be a part of every country's public policy, yet wars and inequalities often prevent this from happening. Today, signs of hope are increasingly found in care homes, communities for minors, centers for listening and acceptance, soup kitchens, homeless shelters and low-income schools. How many of these quiet signs of hope often go unnoticed and yet are so important for setting aside our indifference and inspiring others to become involved in various forms of volunteer work!

The poor are not a distraction for the Church, but our beloved brothers and sisters, for by their lives, their words and their wisdom, they put us in contact with the truth of the Gospel. The celebration of the World Day of the Poor is meant to remind our communities that the poor are at the heart of all our pastoral activity. This is true not only of the Church's charitable work, but also of the message that she celebrates and proclaims. God took on their poverty in order to enrich us through their voices, their stories and their faces. Every form of poverty, without exception, calls us to experience the Gospel concretely and to offer effective signs of hope.

6. This, then, is the invitation extended to us by this Jubilee celebration. It is no coincidence that the World Day of the Poor is celebrated towards the end of this year of grace. Once the Holy Door is closed, we are to cherish and share with others the divine gifts granted us throughout this entire year of prayer, conversion and witness. The poor are not recipients of our pastoral care, but creative subjects who challenge us to find novel ways of living out the Gospel today. In the face of new forms of impoverishment, we can risk becoming hardened and resigned. Each day we encounter poor or impoverished people. We too may have less than before and are losing what once seemed secure: a home, sufficient food for each day, access to healthcare and a good education, information, religious freedom and freedom of expression.

In this promotion of the common good, our social responsibility is grounded in God's creative act, which gives everyone a share in the goods of the earth. Like those goods, the fruits of human labor should be equally accessible to all. Helping the poor is a matter of justice before a question of charity. As Saint Augustine observed: "You give bread to a hungry person; but it would be better if none were hungry, so that you would have no need to give it away. You clothe the naked, but would that all were clothed and that there be no need for supply this lack" (In I Ioan., 8:5).

It is my hope, then, that this Jubilee Year will encourage the development of policies aimed at combatting forms of poverty both old and new, as well as implementing new initiatives to support and assist the poorest of the poor. Labor, education, housing and health are the foundations of a security that will never be attained by the use of arms. I express my appreciation for those initiatives that already exist, and for the efforts demonstrated daily on the international level by great numbers of men and women of good will.

Let us entrust ourselves to Mary Most Holy, Comforter of the Afflicted and, with her, let us raise a song of hope as we make our own the words of the Te Deum: "In you, O Lord, is our hope, and we shall never hope in vain."

From the Vatican, 13 June 2025, Memorial of Saint Anthony of Padua, Patron Saint of the Poor

LEO PP. XIV

