



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

REGINA CAELI

Saint Peter's Square

Easter Monday, 28 March 2016

[Multimedia]

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good Morning!

On this Monday after Easter, called “Monday of the Angel” our hearts are again filled with the joy of Easter. After the Lenten season, the time of penance and conversion, which the Church has lived with particular intensity during this Holy Year of Mercy; after the striking celebrations of the Holy Triduum; today too, we stand before Jesus’ empty tomb, and we meditate with wonder and gratitude on the Resurrection of the Lord.

Life has conquered death. Mercy and Love have conquered sin! We need faith and hope in order to open ourselves to this new and marvellous horizon. And we know that faith and hope are gifts from God, and we need to ask for them: “Lord, grant me faith, grant me hope! I need them so much!”. Let us be permeated by the emotions that resound in the Easter sequence: “Yes, we are sure of it: Christ indeed from death is risen”. The Lord has risen among us! This truth indelibly marked the lives of the Apostles who, after the Resurrection, again sensed the need to follow their Teacher and, having received the Holy Spirit, set out fearlessly to proclaim to all what they had seen with their own eyes and personally experienced.

In this Jubilee Year we are called to rediscover and to receive with particular intensity the comforting news of the Resurrection: “Christ my hope is arisen!”. Since Christ is resurrected, we can look with new eyes and a new heart at every event of our lives, even the most negative ones. Moments of darkness, of failure and even sin can be transformed and announce the beginning of a new path. When we have reached the lowest point of our misery and our weakness, the Risen Christ gives us the strength to rise again. If we entrust ourselves to him, his grace saves us! The Lord, Crucified and Risen, is the full revelation of mercy, present and working throughout history.

This is the Paschal message that resounds again today and will resound for the whole Easter Season until Pentecost.

The silent witness to the events of Jesus' Passion and Resurrection was Mary. She stood beside the Cross: she did not fold in the face of pain; her faith made her strong. In the broken heart of the Mother, the flame of hope was kept ever burning. Let us ask her to help us too to fully accept the Easter proclamation of the Resurrection, so as to embody it in the concreteness of our daily lives.

May the Virgin Mary give us the faithful certitude that every step suffered on our journey, illuminated by the light of Easter, will become a blessing and a joy for us and for others, especially for those suffering because of selfishness and indifference.

Let us invoke her, therefore, with faith and devotion, in the *Regina Caeli*, the prayer that substitutes the *Angelus* during the Easter tide.

After the Regina Caeli:

Dear brothers and sisters, yesterday, in central Pakistan, Holy Easter was bloodied by an abominable attack, that caused the slaughter of many innocent people, for the most part families of the Christian minority — especially women and children — gathered in a public park to celebrate in the joy of the Easter festivities. I wish to express my closeness to all those affected by this cowardly and senseless crime, and I ask you to pray to the Lord for the numerous victims and their loved ones. I appeal to the civil authorities and to all members of the society [of Pakistan] to do everything possible to restore security and peace to the population and, in particular, to the most vulnerable religious minorities. I repeat, once again, that violence and murderous hatred lead only to pain and destruction; respect and fraternity are the only way to achieve peace. May the Lord's Paschal Mystery inspire in us, in an even more powerful way, prayers to God to stop the hands of the violent, who spread terror and death; and may love, justice and reconciliation reign in the world. Let us all pray for those who died in this attack, for their families, for Christian and ethnic minorities in that nation. *Hail Mary....*

In the continuing atmosphere of Easter, I cordially greet you all, pilgrims coming from Italy and other parts of the world to take part in this moment of prayer. And always remember that beautiful expression from the Liturgy: "Christ my hope is arisen!". Let us say it three times together. Christ my hope is arisen!

I hope that each of you is joyfully and peacefully living this Week in which the joy of Christ's Resurrection continues. In order to live this period more intensely it would do us good every day to read a passage from the Gospel which speaks of the Resurrection. You can read a Gospel passage in five minutes, no more. Remember this!

A happy and holy Easter to you all! Please, don't forget to pray for me. Have a good lunch.

Arrivederci!

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