



The Holy See

SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

ACT OF VENERATION TO THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION AT THE SPANISH STEPS

PRAYER OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

Spanish Steps

Sunday, 8 December 2024

[[Multimedia](#)]

Immaculate Virgin,
Mother, Mother Immaculate,

today is your feast day, and we gather around you. The flowers we offer you are to express our love and our gratitude; but you see and cherish above all those hidden flowers that are the prayers, the sighs, even the tears, especially the tears of the little ones and the poor.

Look at them, Mother, look at them.

Dear Mother, Rome is preparing for a new Jubilee, which will be a message of hope for humanity tried by crises and wars. For this reason, there are construction sites all over the city: this — as you know — causes no small challenge, yet it is a sign that Rome is alive, that Rome is being renewed, that Rome is trying to adapt to needs, to be more welcoming and more functional.

But your motherly gaze sees beyond. And it seems I can hear your voice wisely telling us: “My children, these works are fine, but be careful: do not forget the construction sites of the soul! The real Jubilee is within: within, within your hearts — you say — inside family and social relationships. It is within that you must work to prepare the way for the Lord who is coming”.

And it is a good opportunity to make a good Confession and ask for forgiveness for all sins. God forgives everything, God always forgives, always.

Immaculate Mother, we thank you! This counsel of yours does us good, we need it so much, because, without meaning to, we risk being completely occupied by the organizational aspects, by the things that need to be done, and then the grace of the Holy Year, which is a time of spiritual rebirth, a time of forgiveness and social freedom, this jubilee grace may not fully take root, could end up being suffocated. But here the Mayor is preparing everything so that, in this commemoration, in this Holy Year, things will go well. Let us pray for the Mayor, who has so much work.

Surely, Mary, you were present in the synagogue of Nazareth on the day when Jesus, for the first time, preached to the people of His country. He read from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because 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). Then He sat down and said: "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (v. 21). You Mother, were there, among the astonished people. You were proud of Him, your Son, and at the same time, you foresaw the drama of rejection and envy, which generates violence. You endured this drama, and you always endure it, with your immaculate heart full of the love of the Heart of Jesus. Mother, free us from envy: we are all brothers and sisters, who care for each other. No envy. Envy, that yellow, ugly, vice that corrodes from within.

And even today, Mother, you repeat to us: "Listen to Jesus, listen to Him! Listen to Him, and do whatever He tells you" (cf. Jn 2:5). Thank you, Holy Mother! Thank you because, still, in this time poor in hope, you give us Jesus, our Hope. Thank you, Mother.

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