



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

REGINA CÆLI

Saint Peter's Square
Sunday, 1st May 2016

[Multimedia]

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good morning!

Today's Gospel takes us back to the Upper Room. During the Last Supper, before confronting his passion and death on the cross, Jesus promises the Apostles the gift of the Holy Spirit, who will have the task of teaching and recalling [Jesus'] words to the community of disciples. Jesus says: "the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you" (Jn 14:26). Teach and recall. This is what the Holy Spirit does in our hearts.

At the moment in which he is about to return to the Father, Jesus foretells of the coming of the Spirit who will first teach the disciples to understand the Gospel ever more fully, in order to welcome it in their existence and to render it living and operative by their witness. While he is about to entrust to the Apostles — which in fact means "envoys" — the mission of taking the Gospel to all the world, Jesus promises that they will not be alone. The Holy Spirit, the Counselor, will be with them, and will be beside them, moreover, will be within them, to protect and support them. Jesus returns to the Father but continues to accompany and teach his disciples through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The second aspect of the Holy Spirit's mission consists in helping the Apostles to remember Jesus' words. The Spirit has the task of reawakening the memory, recalling Jesus' words. The divine Teacher has already communicated all that he intended to entrust to the Apostles: with Him, the Word made flesh, the revelation is complete. The Spirit will recall Jesus' teachings in the various concrete circumstances of life, so that they may be put into practice. That is precisely what still happens today in the Church, guided by the light and the power of the Holy Spirit, so that he

may bring to everyone the gift of salvation, which is the love and mercy of God. For example, each day when you read — as I have advised you — a passage, a passage of the Gospel, ask the Holy Spirit: “Let me understand and remember these words of Jesus”. Then read the passage, every day.... But first the prayer to the Spirit, who is in our heart: “Let me remember and understand”.

We are not alone: Jesus is close to us, among us, within us! His new presence in history happens through the gift of the Holy Spirit, through whom it is possible to instill a living relationship with Him, the Crucified and Risen One. The Spirit, flowing within us through the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation, acts in our life. He guides us in the way to think, to act, to distinguish between what is good and what is bad; he helps us to practice the charity of Jesus, his giving of himself to others, especially to the most needy. We are not alone! The sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit is also the peace that Jesus gives to his disciples: “My peace I give to you” (v. 27). It is different from what mankind hopes for or tries to achieve. The peace of Jesus flows from victory over sin, over selfishness which impedes us from loving one another as brothers and sisters. It is a gift of God and a sign of his presence. Each disciple called today to follow Jesus carrying the cross, receives within him- or herself the peace of the Crucified and Risen One in the certainty of his victory and in expectation of his definitive coming.

May the Virgin Mary help us to welcome with docility the Holy Spirit as interior Teacher and as the living Memory of Christ on the daily journey.

After the Regina Caeli:

Dear brothers and sisters, my warm thought goes to our brothers and sisters of the Eastern Churches who are celebrating Easter today. May the Risen Lord bring to all the gifts of his light and his peace. *Christos anesti!*

With great sorrow I receive the tragic news coming from Syria, regarding the spiral of violence that continues to worsen the country’s already desperate humanitarian situation, particularly in the city of Aleppo, claiming innocent victims, even among children, the sick and those who with great sacrifice are committed to helping their neighbours. I exhort all parties involved in the conflict to respect the cessation of hostilities and to strengthen the ongoing dialogue, the only path that leads to peace.

Tomorrow an international meeting will open in Rome on the theme of “Sustainable Development and the Most Vulnerable Forms of Work”. I hope the event will raise the awareness of the authorities, political and economic institutions and civil society so as to foster a model of development that takes human dignity into account, in full respect of the norms on work and on the environment.

I greet you, pilgrims from Italy and from other countries. In particular, I greet the faithful from Madrid, Barcelona and Warsaw, as well as the Abraham Community involved in projects of evangelization in Europe, the pilgrims from Olgiate Comasco, Bagnolo Mella, and the confirmands from Castelli Calepio.

I greet the “Meter” Association, who for many years has been fighting against all forms of abuse of minors. This is a tragedy! We must not tolerate the abuse of minors! We must protect minors and we must severely punish their abusers. Thank you for your commitment and continue with courage in this work!

I wish everyone a happy Sunday. Please do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch.
Arrivederci!