



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

REGINA CAELI

*Saint Peter's Square
Sunday, 14 May 2017*

[Multimedia]

*Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Good Morning!*

Yesterday evening, I returned from my [pilgrimage to Fatima](#) — let us greet Our Lady of Fatima — and today's Marian prayer takes on a special meaning, laden with memories and prophesy for those who look at history through the eyes of faith. At Fatima, I immersed myself in the prayer of the Holy faithful people, a prayer that has been flowing there like a river for the past 100 years, to implore Mary's motherly protection over the entire world. I thank the Lord who allowed me to go to the feet of the Virgin Mother as a *pilgrim of hope and of peace*. I offer my heartfelt thanks to the Bishops, the Bishop of Leiria-Fatima, the state Authorities, the President of the Republic and all those who offered their collaboration.

From the beginning, in the [Chapel of the Apparitions](#), as I paused for a long while in silence, accompanied by the prayerful silence of all the pilgrims, an atmosphere of recollection and contemplation was created, in which the various [moments of prayer](#) took place. And at the centre of all this, there was and there is the Risen Lord, present in the midst of his People in the Word and in the Eucharist; present in the midst of so many sick people, who are the protagonists of the liturgical and pastoral life of Fatima, as of every Marian Shrine.

At Fatima, the Virgin chose the innocent heart and simplicity of little Francisco, Jacinta and Lucia, as custodians of her message. These children welcomed it worthily, so much so as to be recognized

as trustworthy witnesses of the apparitions, and becoming role models of Christian life. With the

canonization of Francisco and Jacinta, I wanted to propose to the entire Church their example of bonding with Christ and their evangelic witness, and I also wanted to urge the entire Church to take care of children. Their holiness is not the consequence of the apparitions, but of their faithfulness and the ardour with which they responded to the privilege of being able to see the Virgin Mary. After the encounter with the “Beautiful Lady” — as they called her —, they frequently recited the Rosary, they did penance and offered sacrifices to bring about the end of the War, and for the souls most in need of divine mercy.

And today too, there is much need of prayer and penitence to implore the grace of conversion, to implore the end to the many wars there are throughout the world and that are growing ever larger, as well as an end to the absurd, large and small conflicts which disfigure the face of humanity.

Let us be guided by the Light which comes from Fatima. May the Immaculate Heart of Mary always be our refuge, our consolation and the path that leads to Christ.

After the Regina Caeli:

Dear brothers and sisters, I entrust to Mary, Queen of Peace, the fate of the people affected by war and conflict, particularly in the Middle East. So many innocent people are harshly tested; Christians, Muslims, members of minorities such as the Yazidis, who suffer tragic violence and discrimination. My solidarity is accompanied by their remembrance in my prayers, while I thank those who continue to be committed to assisting with humanitarian needs. I encourage the different communities to walk the path of dialogue and social friendship in order to build a future of respect, security and peace, far from any type of war.

Yesterday in Dublin, the Jesuit Priest John Sullivan was Beatified. He lived in 19th-century Ireland, where he dedicated his life to the teaching and spiritual formation of young people, and was very well loved and sought-after as a father of the poor and the suffering. Let us thank the Lord for his witness.

I greet all of you, the faithful of Rome and pilgrims from Italy; in particular, the faithful of Ivrea, Salerno, Valmontone and Rimini; students from Potenza and Mozzo Bergamo. I greet the participants of the initiative called “*Passeggini vuoti*” (“Empty Prams”) and the group of mothers from Bordighera: the future of our societies requires practical attention to life and maternity from everyone, especially from institutions. And this appeal is particularly significant today, as many countries celebrate Mother’s Day. There, let us remember with gratitude and affection all the mothers, also the mothers in heaven, entrusting them to Mary, the mother of Jesus. And now I will offer you a suggestion: let us pause for a few moments in silence, each one praying for their own mother.

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

Arrivederci!