



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

REGINA CAELI

*Saint Peter's Square
Sunday, 29 April 2018*

[Multimedia]

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good morning!

The Word of God, even on this Fifth Sunday of Easter, continues to indicate to us the way and the conditions to be a community of the Risen Lord. Last Sunday the relationship between the believer and Jesus the Good Shepherd was highlighted. Today the Gospel offers us the moment in which Jesus introduces himself as the true vine and invites us to abide in him so as to bear much fruit (cf. Jn 15:1-8). The vine is a plant whose branches form the whole; and the branches are only fruitful insofar as they are joined with the vine. This relationship is the secret of Christian life and John the Evangelist expresses this with the word 'abide', which is repeated seven times in today's passage. "Abide in me", says the Lord; abide in the Lord.

It means abiding in the Lord in order to find the courage to step outside of ourselves, from our comfort zone, from our limited and protected spaces, in order to cast ourselves into the open sea of the needs of others and to give a wide range to our Christian witness in the world. This courage to step outside ourselves and to advance the needs of others is born from faith in the Risen Lord and from the certainty that his Spirit accompanies our history. One of the ripest fruits that springs from communion with Christ is, in fact, the commitment to charity for our neighbour, loving brothers and sisters with self-sacrifice, to the point of the final consequences, as Jesus loved us. The dynamism of believers' charity is not the result of strategies; it is not born of external stresses, of social or ideological concerns, but rather, it is born from the encounter with Jesus and from abiding in Jesus. For us he is the vine whose sap — that is, 'life' — we absorb, in order to convey into society a different way of living and self-spending which places the least in first place.

When we are intimate with the Lord, as the vine and branches are intimate and joined, we are able to bear the fruits of new life, of mercy, of justice and peace, derived from the Lord's Resurrection. It is what the Saints did, those who lived Christian life in fullness and lived the witness of charity, because they were true branches of the vine of the Lord. But "to be holy does not require being a bishop, a priest or a religious.... We are all called to be holy by living our lives with love and by bearing witness in everything we do, wherever we find ourselves" (Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate*, 14). We are all called to be holy; we must be holy with this richness we have received from the Risen Lord. Every activity — work and rest, family and social life, exercising political, cultural and economic responsibilities — every activity, whether small or great, if lived in union with Jesus and with the attitude of love and of service, is an occasion to live Baptism and Gospel holiness to the fullest.

May Mary, Queen of Saints and example of perfect communion with her Divine Son, help us. May she teach us to *abide in Jesus*, as branches in the vine, and to never distance ourselves from his love. Indeed, we can achieve nothing without him, because our life is the living Christ, present in the Church and in the world.

After reciting the Regina Caeli, the Holy Father continued:

Dear brothers and sisters, yesterday, in Krakow, Hanna Chrzanowska, a faithful laywoman, was proclaimed Blessed. She dedicated her life to taking care of the sick in whom she saw the suffering face of Jesus. Let us give thanks to God for the witness of this apostle of the infirm and let us strive to imitate her example.

I accompany with prayers the positive outcome of last Friday's Inter-Korean Summit and the courageous commitment assumed by the Leaders of both Parties to create a path of sincere dialogue for a Korean Peninsula free of nuclear weapons. I pray to the Lord that the hopes for a future of peace and more fraternal friendship may not disappoint, and that cooperation may continue bearing the fruit of goodness for the beloved people of Korea and for the entire world.

Last week the Christian community of Nigeria was again struck by the killing of a group of faithful, including two priests: let us entrust these brothers and sisters to the God of mercy, that he may help those suffering communities to find concord and peace.

I warmly greet the pilgrims present today; there are truly too many to name each group! But at least I greet those from Braga, Portugal, from India and from Pakistan; the faithful of Pavia, Crema and Vignale; the many young people who have received or will receive Confirmation; and the adolescents from Cuneo, Remedello, Arcore, Valle Olona and Modica and Isnello.

A special thought goes to the Confraternities of Assisi, accompanied by their Bishop; to the young

animators of the Josephite Fathers of Murialdo; and to those taking part in the National Conference of the Catechumate, promoted by the Italian Episcopal Conference.

Dear brothers and sisters, the day after tomorrow, 1 May, in the afternoon I will begin the Marian month with a [pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Divine Love](#). We will recite the Rosary, praying in particular for peace in Syria and in the entire world. I invite you to join spiritually and to continue to pray the Rosary for peace throughout the month of May.

I wish a happy Sunday to all. And please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch.
Arrivederci!