



The Holy See

***VIDEO MESSAGE OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS
TO MARK THE MOMENT OF PRAYER PROMOTED
FOR THE WHOLE COUNTRY BY THE ITALIAN BISHOPS' CONFERENCE (CEI),
ON THE FEAST OF SAINT JOSEPH***

19 March 2020

[Multimedia]

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I join in this moment of prayer that the Episcopal Conference [of Italy] is promoting, as a sign of unity for the whole country.

In this unprecedented situation, in which everything seems to be uncertain, let us help each other to remain steadfast to what really matters. This is the advice I have received in so many letters from your Pastors who, in sharing such a dramatic moment, seek to sustain your hope and your faith with their word.

The Rosary is the prayer of the humble and of the saints. In its mysteries, they contemplate, along with Mary, the life of Jesus, the merciful face of the Father. O, how much we all need to be truly comforted, to feel embraced by his loving presence!

The truth of this experience is measured in our relationship with others, who at this moment, are our closest relatives. Let us be close to one another, being charitable, understanding, patient and forgiving.

Though you may be confined to your own homes, allow your hearts to expand so that it may be available and welcoming to all.

This evening we are praying together, entrusting ourselves to the intercession of St Joseph, Guardian of the Holy Family, Guardian of all our families. The carpenter of Nazareth too, experienced precariousness and bitterness. Though he worried about the future, he knew how to walk in the darkness of certain moments, always letting himself be guided by God's will without reservation.

Protect, O Holy Guardian, this our nation.

Enlighten those responsible for the common good, so that they might know — like you do — how to care for those entrusted to their responsibility.

Grant intelligence of knowledge to those seeking adequate means for the health and physical well-being of their brothers and sisters.

Sustain those who are spending themselves for those in need, even at the cost of their own safety: volunteers, nurses, doctors who are on the front lines in curing the sick.

Bless, St Joseph, the Church: beginning with her ministers, make her the sign and instrument of your light and your goodness.

Accompany, O St Joseph, our families: with your prayerful silence, create harmony between parents and their children, in a special way with the youngest.

Preserve the elderly from loneliness: grant that no one might be left in desperation from abandonment and discouragement.

Comfort those who are the most frail, *encourage* those who falter, *intercede* for the poor.

With the Virgin Mother, beg the Lord to liberate the world from every form of pandemic.

Amen.