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Press Conference for the Presentation of the Lauretan Jubilee Year

At 11.30 this morning, in the Holy See Press Office, a press conference was held to present the Lauretan Jubilee Year, to be held from 8 December 2019 to 10 December 2020, on the occasion of the Centenary of the Proclamation of Our Lady of Loreto as patron saint of aviation, on the theme: *Lauretan Jubilee. Called to fly high*. The speakers were: Archbishop Rino Fisichella, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization; Archbishop Fabio Dal Cin, prelate and Pontifical delegate for the Shrine of the Holy House of Loreto; and Msgr. Antonio Coppola, episcopal vicar for the Italian Air Force.

The following are the interventions by Archbishop Fabio Dal Cin and Msgr. Antonio Coppola:

Intervention by Archbishop Fabio Dal Cin

I cordially greet everyone and thank you for your welcome and your presence.

The Lauretan Jubilee is a gift for which we must first of all thank Pope Francis, who benevolently granted it as a further occasion of grace after visiting us in Loreto, on 25 March last. On that occasion, in the Holy House, the Holy Father signed the post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christus vivit*, on young people. He handed it to the Shrine of Loreto so that it might preserve its living memory, promoting a vocational spirituality for Italy and at an international level, in continuity with the indications that emerged from the Synod on Youth.

The Lauretan Jubilee will begin on Sunday 8 December, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, with the rite of the opening of the Holy Door of the Basilica of the Holy House, presided over by His Eminence Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Parolin, and will end on 10 December 2020.

Why a Lauretan Jubilee?

The Holy House, which according to ancient tradition was carried by angels in flight, inspired the veteran

aviators of the First World War to rely on the Blessed Virgin of Loreto. At that time, in fact, airplanes were popularly called “flying houses”. Thus Pope Benedict XV, on 24 March 1920, declared the Blessed Virgin Mary of Loreto “principal patroness to God for all aircraft”. The centenary of the proclamation is therefore the occasion of this Jubilee.

However, the Jubilee event does not only concern the world of aviation (workers and passengers), but is addressed to all the devotees of Our Lady of Loreto, and to all those who come to the Holy House from all over the world to receive the gift of Plenary Indulgence.

In the Jubilee prayer (in the folder), the Pope invites us to pray as follows: “As we fly up, let our spirit also rise”. The flight of aeroplanes therefore becomes the metaphor of our existence. We are all called to fly high, because God offers everyone the possibility of a good, that is, holy, life.

In the pastoral letter “Called to fly high”, I proposed some points for reflection so that this flying is not intended as “fluttering” or “wandering”, performing extraordinary feats, but accepting Christ as the “Pilot” of our life, is an extraordinary way of doing ordinary things, placing faith and love in us as Mary did. The letter simply helps us to understand the meaning of the Jubilee, a Jubilee that is intended as a great opportunity for us all to revive our adherence to Christ the one Saviour, without whom it is illusory to dream of a more just, fraternal and supportive society.

From this point of view, the Jubilee becomes a favourable occasion to rediscover the call to holiness in the contemporary world, as presented to us by Pope Francis in the Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et exsultate*.

The second text presents some Pastoral Indications for better living the Holy Year and for understanding its most important signs: the Pilgrimage, the Holy Door, the Plenary Indulgence, Charity and Marian Prayer.

During the Lauretan Holy Year, the only jubilee church in the world will be the Shrine of the Holy House of Loreto. However, in order to enhance the pastoral value of places of worship in civil and military aviation, the possibility of receiving the gift of the Plenary Indulgence is also extended to civil and military airport chapels, upon request sent to the Pontifical Delegation by the local Ordinary (see: text of the Decree of the Apostolic Penitentiary proclaimed in Loreto on 1 November and included in the folder). In this regard, requests have already arrived from various countries (Brazil, Spain, Poland, France, Italy, the United States, etc.).

The connotation of the Jubilee is clearly Marian: it is recalled by the official logo created for the event, in which the words *Regina et Ianua Coeli* (Mary Queen and Door of Heaven), taken from the Lauretan Litanies spread throughout the world from the Shrine of the Holy House, can be read. The logo expresses the meaning of the Jubilee: the Holy House supported by angels, the crown symbolizing the royalty of the Virgin and a plane pointing upwards, representing humanity on its way to that desire for fullness of life present in the heart of every person.

Mgr. Marco Frisina, whom I thank most sincerely, composed the official hymn of the Jubilee. I am also very grateful to him because it will be he who will lead the choir that will animate the solemn celebration of the Holy Mass for the opening of the Jubilee.

The joy of the Jubilee cannot but be shared joy, which translates into concrete solidarity, especially with those most in need. For this reason, the Shrine proposes two initiatives of charity: one, so to speak, “at home” and the other in the Holy Land.

The local one concerns the reception of the young people who will come to Loreto, staying in the Youth Centre, which according to the indications of Pope Francis will promote educational projects inspired by *Christus vivit*.

The second initiative is aimed at Nazareth, where there is the other half of the House of Mary; it is about providing new specialist equipment for the new neonatology of the Holy Family Hospital and helping the local

Miriam Association in the fight against cancer.

Both projects favour the family, the young and the sick, who are the priorities of the evangelizing action of the Shrine. In this sense, I would like to highlight an initiative that will be promoted in this Holy Year. It is the Agora of the family: a week of religious, cultural and artistic events to deepen the theme of the house as a place of primordial relationships.

In the preparation and conduct of this Jubilee Year, we are living a beautiful experience of collaboration in synergy with different realities and institutions. The main ones are represented here: first of all the Air Force, with General Alberto Rosso, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, and Monsignor Antonio Coppola, delegate of the Military Ordinary in Italy, Archbishop Santo Marciànò; the Enac represented here by its president Dr. Nicola Zaccheo and by the general manager, Alessio Quaranta; Fulvio Cavalleri, vice president of Assaeroporti, and Fabio Lazzzerini, chief business officer of Alitalia. I thank everyone for their active and enthusiastic participation.

A fraternal thank you to all the airport chaplains for their helpfulness.

This Jubilee will also be a “travelling Jubilee”. Thanks to the above mentioned Institutions, the Pontifical Delegation has been able to promote the journey of three statues of Our Lady of Loreto, which will leave on 9 December from Falconara Ancona airport. One image of the Virgin will touch the airports of the regions of Italy (from Turin to Bari, from Venice to Palermo; 21 flights, details may be consulted in the folder); another will visit the military departments and the other will travel to the main airports of the five continents (from Buenos Aires to New York, from Toronto to the main European capitals, from Beirut to Manila and the Fiji Islands). This *Peregrinatio* will represent the Mother’s embrace of the whole world. For this feat I would like to thank Aeronautica Militare, Enac, Assaeroporti, Alitalia and Aeroclub groups.

I would like to point out here some of the most significant events of this jubilee year, which you will find in the extensive but so far incomplete Lauretan Jubilee Calendar:

- The *Jubilee Fridays* in Loreto: moments of reflection by Msgr. Marco Frisina;
- 24 March: celebration in Loreto of the centenary of the proclamation of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Loreto as patron saint of air travellers;
- 25 March: Jubilee of students to commemorate Pope Francis’s visit;
- From 3-10 May: Agora of the Family;
- 5-6 September: Air Show with the Tricolour Arrows; and
- 26 September: the *Lectio Magistralis* of His Eminence Cardinal Gianfranco Ravasi on the theme “The house, space for relationships and revelation”.

Among the cultural initiatives, I would like to indicate the two permanent exhibitions held in the *Cantine del Bramante* in the Apostolic Palace of Loreto (see folder).

The first is dedicated to the relics that the aviators have donated to Our Lady of Loreto: such as the image of Our Lady of Loreto that Umberto Nobile brought with him in the first crossing of the North Pole in 1926, and the photo of the astronauts with the medal of Our Lady of Loreto brought in space with the Apollo programme, in 1965.

The second exhibition presents the history of the manufacture of rosaries, which makes Loreto the cradle of world craftsmanship in the production of crown rosaries.

In support of all the initiatives and above all so that the Lauretan Jubilee may truly be an event of grace, friendship and fraternity in the name of faith, the *Pietre vive* (Living Stones) initiative has been inaugurated. It is a worldwide network of prayer enabling each person to connect spiritually with the Holy House to accompany the journey of families, young people and the sick.

All this can be found on the Jubilee website www.jubileaeumlauretanum.it or on the website of the Shrine www.santuarioloreto.it, with the up-to-date calendar of events.

The rite of opening of the Holy Door and the celebration with Cardinal Pietro Parolin can be followed from 3.30 p.m. on PADRE PIO TV and in streaming on the YOUTUBE channel of the SANTA CASA LORETO; and on the radio on RADIO MARIA.

Intervention by Msgr. Antonio Coppola

The bond between the Saints and the Armed Forces is something that belongs, deeply, to our identity and that neither time nor changes in the geopolitical scenario have ever affected. And so, the relationship between the military world and the spiritual sphere is very close and honoured, almost always with solemn celebrations.

The link between the Italian Air Force and Our Lady of Loreto has its roots in the early twentieth century and found its institutional peak when the Holy Father Benedict XV, in response to requests from airmen around the world after the First World War, with a solemn decree dated 24 March 1920, proclaimed Our Lady of Loreto "Heavenly Patroness of the Air Force". The Italian Air Force was born as an Armed Force only three years after on 28 March 1923, immediately relying on the protection of the Blessed Virgin Lauretana.

In the light of what has been said, 2020 will be a special year for the Air Force, full of religious, charitable and cultural initiatives. It will be a valuable opportunity for all to reflect and carry out their activities with passion, attention and professionalism, essential features to ensure the safety and serenity of our country.

The calendar of activities of the Air Force is very rich (you will find it in the folder), but I list only some, of particular importance: on 10 December 2019, the Military Ordinary for Italy, Archbishop Santo Marciànò, will preside over a solemn Eucharistic Concelebration in the Papal Basilica of Saint Mary Major in Rome at the end of which, delivering to the Chief of Staff the image of the Blessed Virgin of Loreto, the *Peregrinatio Mariae* of all the entities of the Italian Air Force will begin. This mission was desired by the prelate to enable this Year of Grace to be lived in a capillary way, so that no one will be excluded. It will begin in the first decade of January 2020 in Sicily, and will end in Lazio in the first decade of December 2020.

In the evening, the Concert, the presentation of the 2020 calendar and the presentation of the Centenary Project of Our Lady of Loreto will take place, with the launch of the related charity activity.

On 24 March 2020, there will be a pilgrimage to Loreto of the AM personnel and other Military Departments that share the activity of flight and the protection of the Virgin of the Holy House.

On 9 December 2020, in the context of musical and cultural activities, the results of the charity initiative "A Gift from Heaven" will be presented.

The entire Jubilee Year will end with the celebration in Saint Peter's Basilica in the Vatican on 10 December 2020, with the hope of having among us the Holy Father Francis.

This regards only the specific activities of the Italian Air Force which, in turn, together with the Military Ordinariate, forms part of a larger and more universal project that has as its centre the Sanctuary of the Holy House of Loreto and the Pontifical Delegation.
