



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE
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Pastoral visit of the Holy Father to Carpi – Angelus prayer and blessing of the first stones of the four new buildings of the Diocese of Carpi

Appeal of the Holy Father

The Holy Father's words before the Angelus prayer

At the end of the Holy Mass in Piazza Martiri in Carpi, before reciting the Marian Angelus prayer, the Holy Father Francis expressed his closeness to the inhabitants of the city of Mocoa in Colombia, devastated by a landslide that has claimed numerous victims.

The Pope then made an appeal for peace in the Kasai region, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and finally urged prayer for the difficult situations in Venezuela and in Paraguay.

At the end of the Angelus, the four first stones for the parish of Sant'Agata in Carpi, the House of Spiritual Exercises in Novi, the Citadel of Charity of Carpi and the multipurpose facility of San Martino Corona in Mirandola were presented to the Pope for his blessing.

The following are the Pope's appeals and his introduction to the Marian prayer:

Appeals of the Holy Father

I am deeply saddened by the tragedy that has struck Colombia, where a gigantic mudslide caused by torrential rains, hit the city of Mocoa, causing numerous deaths and injuries. I pray for the victims and assure you of my and your closeness to those who mourn the death of their loved ones, and I thank all those who are working to bring relief.

There continue to be reports of bloody armed clashes in the region of Kasai in the Democratic Republic of

Congo, clashes which are claiming victims and causing displacement, and which also affect people and property of the Church: churches, hospitals and schools. I assure you of my closeness to this nation, and I urge you all to pray for peace so that the hearts of those responsible for such crimes do not remain slaves to hatred and violence, as hatred and violence always destroy.

In addition, I follow with great attention to what is happening in Venezuela and Paraguay. I pray for those populations, which are very dear to me, and I urge everyone to persevere tirelessly, avoiding any form of violence, in the search for political solutions.

The Holy Father's words before the Angelus prayer

Dear brothers and sisters,

I would like to thank you for coming here, to this Mass. I want to thank all those who worked for this double "marathon": last Sunday [for the inauguration of the restored Cathedral] and this. Thank you very much! And I want to thank you, the sick. There are 4,500 sick people here! Thank you: with your sufferings you help the Church, you help to carry the cross of Christ. Thank you! Many thanks to you!

And at the end of this celebration, our thoughts turn to the Blessed Virgin, whom you venerate in the cathedral church dedicated to her. To Mary we offer our joys, our sorrows and our hopes. We ask you to place her merciful gaze upon those among us who are suffer, especially the sick, the poor and those without dignified work.

Recalling the apostolic zeal of two figures lay of your land, Blessed Odoardo Focherini and Venerable Marianna Saltini, witnesses of the charity of Christ, I greet you, the lay faithful, with gratitude. I encourage you to be agents in the life of your community, in communion with your priests: always focus on what is essential in proclaiming and witnessing the Gospel.

I thank you, dear Bishop Francesco, and all of you, the bishops of the Emilia-Romagna region, for your presence, and above all the pastor of this diocese, Msgr. Francesco Cavina: I urge you to be close to your priests with listening, tenderness and thoughtful closeness.

Finally, I would like to thank each and every one of you, dear faithful, priests, men and women religious, the authorities and especially those who helped to organize this visit, with a special thought for the AGESCI and the choir, composed of all the choirs of the diocese, who have animated this liturgy.

Entrusting our lives and the fate of the Church and of the world to Mary, let us recite the *Angelus* prayer together.

At the end, the Holy Father transferred to the Seminary of Carpi where, at 13.00, he lunched with the bishops of the region, elderly priests resident in the House of Clergy, and seminarians.