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Apostolic Trip of His Holiness Francis to Romania (31 May to 2 June 2019) – Recitation of the Pater Noster in the new Orthodox Cathedral of Bucharest

Recitation of the *Pater Noster* in the new Orthodox Cathedral of Bucharest

This afternoon, at 17.00 (16.00 in Rome), the Holy Father Francis visited the new Orthodox People's Salvation Cathedral in Bucharest. The Pope was greeted at the Cathedral steps by His Beatitude Daniel, Patriarch of Romania. They then entered and proceeded along the central nave together.

After the entrance hymn and the welcome address from the Patriarch, Pope Francis gave his greeting. This was followed by the recitation of the *Pater Noster* in Latin and in Romanian, interspersed with Paschal hymns, both Catholic and Orthodox. After the final hymn, the Holy Father greeted ten of the highest authorities of the country.

At the end, His Beatitude Daniel accompanied the Holy Father Francis to the parvis of the Cathedral for the blessing of all the faithful present. The Pope then transferred by popemobile to Saint Joseph Cathedral.

The following are the Holy Father's words of greeting pronounced during the moment of prayer in the new Orthodox Cathedral of Bucharest:

Greeting of the Holy Father

Your Holiness, Dear Brother, Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am grateful and moved to be in this holy temple that brings us together in unity. Jesus called the brothers Andrew and Peter to leave their nets and to become together fishers of men (cf. *Mk* 1:16-17). The calling of one brother was incomplete without that of the other. Today we wish to raise, side by side, from the heart of this country, the Lord's Prayer. That prayer contains the sure promise made by Jesus to his disciples: "I will not leave you orphaned" (*Jn* 14:18), and gives us the confidence to receive and welcome the gift of our brothers and

sisters. I would like therefore to share some thoughts in preparation for this prayer, which I will recite for our journey of fraternity and for the intention that Romania may always be a home for everyone, a land of encounter, a garden where reconciliation and communion flourish.

Each time we say “Our Father”, we state that the word *Father* cannot stand on its own, apart from *Our*. United in Jesus’ prayer, we are also united to his experience of love and intercession, which leads us to say: “My Father and your Father, my God and your God” (cf. *Jn* 20:17). We are invited to make *my* become *our*, and *our* to become a prayer. Help us, Father, to take our brother or sister’s lives seriously, to make their history our history. Help us, Father, not to judge our brother or sister for their actions and their limitations, but to welcome them before all else as your son or daughter. Help us to overcome the temptation to act like the elder brother, who was so concerned with himself that he forgot the gift of the other person (cf. *Lk* 15:25-32).

To you, Father, *who art in heaven*, a heaven that embraces all and in which you make the sun rise on the good and the evil, on the just and the unjust (cf. *Mt* 5:45), we implore the peace and harmony that here on earth we have failed to preserve. We ask this through the intercession of all those brothers and sisters in faith who dwell with you in heaven after having believed, loved and suffered greatly, even in our own days, simply for the fact that they were Christians.

Together with them, we wish to *hallow your name*, placing it at the heart of all we do. May your name, Lord, and not ours, be the one that moves and awakens in us the exercise of charity. How many times, in prayer, do we limit ourselves to asking for gifts and listing requests, forgetting that the first thing we should do is praise your name, adore you, and then go on to acknowledge, in the brother or sister whom you have placed at our side, a living image of you. In the midst of all those passing things in which we are so caught up, help us, Father, to seek what truly lasts: your presence and that of our brother or sister.

We wait in expectation for *your kingdom to come*. We ask for it and we long for it, because we see that the workings of this world do not favour it, organized as they are around money, personal interests and power. Sunken as we are in an increasingly frenetic consumerism that entices us with glittering but fleeting realities, we ask you to help us, Father, to believe in what we pray for: to give up the comfortable security of power, the deceptive allure of worldliness, the vain presumption of our own self-sufficiency, the hypocrisy of cultivating appearances. In this way, we will not lose sight of that Kingdom to which you summon us.

Thy will be done, not our will. “God’s will is that all be saved” (SAINT JOHN CASSIAN, *Spiritual Conferences*, IX, 20). We need to broaden our horizons, Father, lest we place our own limits on your merciful, salvific will that wishes to embrace everyone. Help us, Father, by sending to us, as at Pentecost, the Holy Spirit, source of courage and joy, to impel us to preach the good news of the Gospel beyond the confines of the communities to which we belong, our languages, our cultures and our nations.

Each day we need him, *our daily bread*. He is the *bread of life* (cf. *Jn* 6:35.48) that makes us realize that we are beloved sons and daughters, and makes us feel no longer isolated and orphaned. He is the *bread of service*, broken to serve us, and asking us in turn to serve one another (cf. *Jn* 13:14). Father, as you give us our daily bread, strengthen us to reach out and serve our brothers and sisters. And as we ask you for our daily bread, we ask also for *the bread of memory*, the grace to nurture the shared roots of our Christian identity, so indispensable in an age when humanity, and the young in particular, tend to feel rootless amid the uncertainties of life, and incapable of building their lives on a solid foundation. The bread that we ask begins with a seed, slowly grows into an ear of grain, is then harvested and is finally brought to our table. May it inspire us to be patient *cultivators of communion*, tireless in sowing seeds of unity, encouraging goodness, working constantly at the side of our brothers and sisters. Without suspicion or reserve, without pressuring or demanding uniformity, in the fraternal joy of a reconciled diversity.

The bread we ask today is also the bread of which so many people today are lacking, while a few have more than enough. The *Our Father* is a prayer that leaves us troubled and crying out in protest against the *famine of love* in our time, against the individualism and indifference that profane your name, Father. Help us to hunger to give freely of ourselves. Remind us, whenever we pray, that life is not about keeping ourselves comfortable but

about letting ourselves be broken; not about accumulating but about sharing; not about eating to our heart's content but about feeding others. Prosperity is only prosperity if it embraces everyone.

Each time we pray, we ask that our *trespasses*, our debts, be *forgiven*. This takes courage, for it means that we must forgive the trespasses of others, the debts that others have incurred in our regard. We need to find the strength to forgive our brother or sister from the heart (cf. *Mt 18:35*), even as you, Father, forgive our trespasses: to leave the past behind us and, together, to embrace the present. Help us, Father, not to yield to fear, not to see openness as a threat, to find the strength to forgive each other and move on, and the courage not to settle for a quiet life but to keep seeking, with transparency and sincerity, the face of our brothers and sisters.

And when the *evil* that lurks at the doorway of our heart (cf. *Gen 4:7*) makes us want to close in on ourselves; when we feel more strongly the *temptation* to turn our back on others, help us again, Father, for the essence of sin is withdrawal from you and from our neighbour. Help us to recognize in every one of our brothers and sisters a source of support on our common journey to you. Inspire in us the courage to say together: *Our Father*. Amen.

And now, let us recite the prayer that the Lord has taught us.
