

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE
OFICINA DE PRENSA DE LA SANTA SEDE



BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIEGE
PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLS

BOLLETTINO

SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

N. 220501a

Sunday 01.05.2022

The Pope's words at the Regina Caeli prayer

At midday today, Third Sunday of Easter, the Pope appeared at the window of his study in the Vatican Apostolic Palace to pray the Regina Caeli with the pilgrims and faithful gathered in Saint Peter's Square.

The following are his words of introduction to the Marian prayer:

Before the *Regina Caeli*

Dear brothers and sisters, *happy Sunday!*

The Gospel of today's Liturgy (*Jn 21:1-19*) recounts the third appearance of the Risen Jesus to the Apostles. It is a meeting that takes place by the Lake of Galilee, and above all involves Simon Peter. It all begins with him saying to the other disciples: "I am going fishing" (v. 3). There was nothing strange about this, since he was a fisherman, but he had abandoned this work from the time he had left his nets on the shore of that very lake in order to follow Jesus. And now, while the Risen One is waiting, Peter, perhaps a little disheartened, proposes to the others that he return to his former life. And the others accept: "We will go with you". But "that night they caught nothing". (v. 3).

This can happen to us, out of tiredness, disappointment, perhaps out of laziness, to forget the Lord and to neglect the great choices we have made, to content ourselves with something else. For example, not to dedicate time to talking together in the family, preferring personal pastimes; we forget prayer, letting ourselves get wrapped up in our own needs; we neglect charity, with the excuse of daily urgencies. But, in doing so, we find ourselves disappointed: it is that very disappointment that Peter felt, with empty nets, like him. It is a road that takes you backwards, and does not satisfy you.

And what does Jesus do with Peter? He returns again to the shore of the lake where he had chosen him, Andrew, James and John. He does not reproach them – Jesus does not reproach, he touches the heart, always – but calls the disciples tenderly: "Children" (v. 5). Then he invites them, as before, to cast their nets again

courageously. And this time the nets are filled to overflowing. Brothers and sisters, when our nets are empty in life, it is not the time to feel sorry for ourselves, to have fun, to return to old pastimes. It is time to begin again with Jesus, it is time to find the courage to begin again, it is time to put out to sea again with him. Always, faced with a disappointment, or a life that has lost its meaning somewhat – “today I feel as if I have gone backwards” – set out again with Jesus, start again, put out into the deep! He is waiting for you. And he is thinking only of you, me, each one of us.

Peter needed that “shock”. When he hears John cry: “It is the Lord!” (v. 7), he immediately dives into the water and swims towards Jesus. It is a gesture of love, because love goes beyond usefulness, convenience or duty; love generates wonder, it inspires creative, freely-given zeal. In this way, while John, the youngest, recognizes the Lord, it is Peter, the eldest, who dives towards him. In that dive there is all the new-found enthusiasm of Simon Peter.

Dear brothers and sisters, today the Risen Christ invites us to a new impetus – everyone, each one of us – he invites us to dive into the good without the fear of losing something, without calculating too much, without waiting for others to begin. Why? Do not wait for others, because in order to go out to meet Jesus, we need to be put off balance. We need to be put off balance with courage, restore ourselves, but restore ourselves unbalanced, taking risks. Let us ask ourselves: am I capable of an outburst of generosity, or do I restrain the impulses of my heart and close myself off in routine, in fear? Jump in, dive in. This is today’s word from Jesus.

Then, at the end of this episode, Jesus asks Peter, three times, the question: “Do you love me?” (vv. 15-16). The Risen Lord asks us too today: *Do you love me?* Because at Easter, Jesus wants our hearts to rise too; because faith is not a question of knowledge, but of love. *Do you love me?* Jesus asks you, me, us, who have empty nets and are afraid to start out again; who do not have the courage to dive in and have perhaps lost our momentum. *Do you love me?* Jesus asks. From then on, Peter stopped fishing forever and dedicated himself to the service of God and to his brothers and sisters to the point of giving his life here, where we are now. And what about us, do we want to love Jesus?

May Our Lady, who readily said “yes” to the Lord, help us to rediscover the impulse to do good.

After the Regina Caeli

Dear brothers and sisters!

Yesterday, Don Mario Ciceri and Armida Barelli were beatified in Milan. The first was a country deputy parish priest; he devoted himself to prayer and confession, visited the sick and stayed beside the boys at the oratory, as a gentle educator and safe guide. A shining example of a pastor. Armida Barelli was the founder and animator of the Female Youth of Catholic Action. She travelled all over Italy to inspire girls and young women to ecclesial and civil commitment. She collaborated with Father Gemelli to set up a secular women’s institute and the Sacred Heart Catholic University, which is celebrating its annual day today and has named it “With a woman’s heart” in her honour. A round of applause for the new Blessed!

Today is the beginning of the month dedicated to the Mother of God. I would like to invite all the faithful and communities to pray the Rosary for peace every day in May. My thought goes to the Ukrainian city of Mariupol, “Mary’s city”, barbarically bombed and destroyed. Once again, from here, I renew my request that safe humanitarian corridors be arranged for the people trapped in the steelworks in that city. I suffer and weep, thinking of the sufferings of the Ukrainian people, and in particular, the weakest, the elderly and children. There are even terrible reports of children being expelled and deported.

And while we are witnessing a macabre regression of humanity, I wonder, along with so many anguished people, if peace is truly being sought; whether there is the will to avoid a continued military and verbal

escalation; whether everything possible is being done to silence the weapons. I beg you, let us not surrender to the logic of violence, to the perverse spiral of weapons. May the path of dialogue and peace be taken! Let us pray.

And today is Labour Day. May it be a stimulus to the renew of efforts to ensure that work is dignified everywhere and for everyone. And may the world of work inspire the will to develop an economy of peace. And I would like to remember workers who died at work: it is a widespread tragedy, perhaps too much so.

The day after tomorrow, 3 May, is UNESCO World Press Freedom Day. I pay homage to journalists who pay with their lives to serve this right. Last year, 47 journalists were killed worldwide, and more than 350 were imprisoned. Special thanks go to those who courageously inform us of the wounds of humanity.

I greet you all, Romans and pilgrims from Italy and many countries. In particular, I greet the faithful from Spain, Portugal and the United States of America, as well as the Maronite parish of Nazareth and that of Saint Rita in Warsaw. I greet the "Jubilee" Choir of Conselve and the students of Mascalucia. A special thought goes to the "Meter" Association, which has for many years combatted violence and abuse of minors, always taking the side of the little ones. And I also greet the young people of the *Immacolata*.

I wish a blessed Sunday to you all! And please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your meal, and *arrivederci*.
