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BIURO PRASOWE STOLICY APOSTOLSKIEJ دار الصحافة التابعة للكرسي الرسولي

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The Pope's words at the Regina Caeli prayer

At midday today, Sunday of Pentecost, the Holy Father Francis appeared at the window of his study in the Vatican Apostolic Palace to pray the *Regina Caeli* with the approximately twenty thousand faithful and pilgrims gathered in Saint Peter's Square.

The following are the Pope's words of introduction to the Marian prayer:

Dear brothers and sisters, happy Feast of Pentecost, buongiorno!

Today, Solemnity of Pentecost, we celebrate the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Mary and the Apostles. In the Gospel of the liturgy, Jesus speaks about the Holy Spirit and says that He will teach us "whatever He hears" (cf. *Jn 16:13*). But what does this expression mean? What has the Holy Spirit heard? What will He speak about?

He speaks to us with words that express wonderful sentiments, such as affection, gratitude, entrustment, mercy. Words that make us know a beautiful, luminous, concrete and lasting relationship such as the eternal Love of God: the words that the Father and the Son say to each other. They are precisely *the transformative words of love*, which the Holy Spirit repeats in us, and which it is good for us to listen to, because these words engender and make grow the same sentiments and the same intentions in our heart: they are fruitful words.

This is why it is important that we nourish ourselves every day with the Words of God, the Words of Jesus, inspired by the Spirit. And many times I say: read a passage from the Gospel, get a little pocket-sized Gospel and keep it with you, making the most of favourable moments to read it. The priest and poet Clemente Rebora, speaking of his conversion, wrote in his diary: "And the Word silenced my chatter!" (*Curriculum vitae*). The Word of God silences our superficial chatter and makes us say serious words, beautiful words, joyful words. "And the Word silenced my chatter!" Listening to the Word of God makes the chatter stop. This is how to give space in us to the voice of the Holy Spirit. And then in the Adoration – let us not forget the prayer of Adoration in silence – especially that which is simple, silent, like adoration. And there, saying good words within ourselves, saying them to the heart so as to be able to say them to others, afterwards, to each other. And in this way we see that

they come from the voice of the Consoler, of the Spirit.

Dear sisters and brothers, reading and meditating on the Gospel, praying in silence, saying good words: they are not difficult things, no, we can all do them. They are easier than insulting, getting angry... And so, let us ask ourselves: what place do these words have in my life? How can I cultivate them, in order to listen better to the Holy Spirit, and become an echo of Him for others?

May Mary, present at Pentecost with the Apostles, make us docile to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

After the Regina Caeli

Dear brothers and sisters!

The Holy Spirit is He who creates harmony, harmony! And He creates it from different, at times even conflictual, realities. Today, Feast of Pentecost, let us pray to the Holy Spirit, Love of the Father and the Son, that He may create harmony in hearts, harmony in families, harmony in society, harmony in the entire world; may the Spirit make communion and fraternity grow between Christians of different denominations; give governors the courage to make gestures of dialogue, that lead to an end to wars. Today's many wars: think of Ukraine – my thoughts go in particular to the city of Kharkiv, which suffered an attack two days ago; think of the Holy Land, of Palestine, of Israel; think of the many places where there are wars. May the Spirit guide the leaders of nations and all of us to open the doors to peace.

I express my gratitude for the welcome and affection of the people of Verona, yesterday: they were good, the Veronese! Thank you, thank you. In a particular way I think of the prison of Verona, I think of the inmates who bore witness to me once again that behind the prison walls, life humanity and hope pulsate. My heartfelt thanks go to all the prison staff, and in particular the Director, Dr. Francesca Gioieni.

I greet all of you, pilgrims from Rome and different parts of Italy and the world. In particular, I greet those of Timor-Leste – I will come to visit you soon! – those of Latvia and Uruguay, as well as the Paraguayan community of Rome, which is celebrating the Virgen de Caacupé, and the Catholic Portuguese Mission of Lucerne.

I greet the young people of the *Immacolata*; I greet the religious sisters who are here, good! I greet the faithful of Benevento, Porto Azzurro and Terracina, and the “Caterina di Santa Rosa” Institute of Rome.

I wish you all a good Sunday. Please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch, and arrivederci!
