



# The Holy See

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POPE FRANCIS

***REGINA COELI***

*Saint Peter's Square*

*Divine Mercy Sunday, 28 April 2019*

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## **[Multimedia]**

*Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good morning!*

Today's Gospel passage (cf. Jn 20:19-31) recounts that on the day of Easter, Jesus appears to his disciples in the Upper Room, in the evening, bearing three gifts: *peace*, *joy*, the apostolic *mission*.

The first words he says are: "Peace be with you" (v. 21). The Risen One brings authentic peace, because through his sacrifice on the Cross he achieved reconciliation between God and humanity, and he conquered sin and death. This is peace. His disciples needed this peace first and foremost, because, after the Master was arrested and condemned to death, they fell into dismay and fear. Jesus appears among them alive and, in showing the wounds — Jesus wanted to preserve his wounds — in his glorious body, gives peace as the fruit of his victory. But that evening the Apostle Thomas was not present. Apprised of this extraordinary event, incredulous at the testimony of the other Apostles, he demands to personally verify the truth of what they assert. Eight days later, just as today, the apparition is repeated: Jesus confronts Thomas' incredulity, inviting him to touch His wounds. They are the sources of peace, because they are the sign of the immense love of Jesus who defeated the forces hostile to man: sin, death. He invites him to touch the wounds. It is a lesson for us, as if Jesus were to tell all of us: "If you are not at peace, touch my wounds".

Touch Jesus' wounds, which are the many problems, difficulties, persecutions, illnesses of so many suffering people. Are you not at peace? Go. Go to visit someone who is the symbol of Jesus' wounds. Touch Jesus' wounds. Mercy flows from those wounds. That is why today is the

Sunday of Mercy. A saint used to say that Jesus' crucified body is like a bundle of mercy, which reaches each of us through his wounds. All of us need mercy, as we know. Let us draw near to Jesus and touch his wounds in our suffering brothers and sisters. Jesus' wounds are a treasure: mercy issues from them. Let us be courageous and touch Jesus' wounds. With these wounds he stands before the Father; he reveals them to the Father, as if to say: "Father, this is the price; these wounds are what I paid for my brothers and sisters". With his wounds Jesus intercedes before the Father. He gives us mercy if we draw near, and he intercedes for us. Do not forget Jesus' wounds.

The second gift that the Risen Jesus brings to his disciples is *joy*. The evangelist recounts that "the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord" (v. 20). And there is also a verse, in Luke's version, that says that they disbelieved for joy. We too, perhaps when something incredible, beautiful has happened, might say: "I cannot believe it; this is not true!". This is how the disciples were. They disbelieved for joy. This is the joy that Jesus brings us. If you are sad, if you are not at peace, look to Jesus Crucified; look to the Risen Jesus; look at his wounds and receive that joy.

And then, in addition to peace and joy, Jesus also brings the gift of *mission* to the disciples. He says to them: "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you" (v. 21). Jesus' Resurrection is the beginning of a new dynamism of love, capable of transforming the world with the presence of the Holy Spirit.

This second Sunday of Easter, we are invited to approach Christ with faith, opening our heart to peace, joy and the mission. But let us not forget Jesus' wounds because from them come peace, joy and the strength for the mission. Let us entrust this prayer to the maternal intercession of the Virgin Mary, Queen of Heaven and Earth.

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***After reciting the Regina Caeli, the Holy Father continued:***

Dear brothers and sisters, yesterday in Rioja, Argentina, Bishop Enrique Angel Angelelli, Franciscan Fr Carlos de Dios Murias, *fidei donum* priest Fr Gabriel Longueville, and the catechist and family father Wenceslao Pedernera were proclaimed Blessed. These martyrs of the faith were persecuted for the cause of justice and evangelical charity. May their example and their intercession especially support those working for a more just and sympathetic society. One of them was French. He had gone to Argentina as a missionary. The other three were from Argentina. Let us all give the newly Beatified a round of applause.

I invite you to join me in prayer for refugees in detention centres in Libya, whose situation is very grave and made more dangerous by the ongoing conflict. I express an appeal that in particular women, children and the sick may be swiftly evacuated through humanitarian corridors.

Let us also pray for those who have lost their lives or suffered serious damage due to the recent floods in South Africa. May these brothers and sisters also not lack our solidarity and the concrete support of the international community.

I greet you all, faithful from Rome and pilgrims from Italy and many other countries, in particular the faithful from Tlalnepantla, Mexico, the young people from Valencia, the students from Tricase, the adolescents from Arcore and those from Carugo, the faithful from Modugno and Genoa. I offer a special greeting to the diocesan pilgrimage of families from the Archdiocese of Trani-Barletta-Bisceglie, as well as the devout followers of the Divine Mercy assembled today in the Church of *Santo Spirito in Sassia*.

I offer my heartfelt greeting to our brothers and sisters from the Oriental Churches who today, in accordance with the Julian calendar, are celebrating Holy Easter. May the Risen Lord give them joy and peace! And a round of applause also to all Oriental Catholics and Orthodox, to wish them "Happy Easter".

Lastly, I thank all those who have sent me Easter greetings throughout this period. I return my heartfelt greetings to them and invoke all good to each one and to every family.

Happy Sunday to all! And, please do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch. *Arrivederci!*