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Regina Coeli: the Pope asks for the liberation of Catholic and Orthodox bishops, priests and religious held hostage in Syria

Vatican City, 24 April 2016 – In the Regina Coeli, following the Holy Mass for the Jubilee of Boys and Girls, the Pope recalled the beatification yesterday in Burgos, Spain, of the priest Valentín Palencia Marquina and four companions, young martyrs, assassinated for their faith during the Spanish Civil War. "Let us praise the Lord for these courageous witnesses, and by their intercession let us pray for the liberation of the world of all violence".

He went on to express his concern for his brother bishops, priests and religious, both Catholic and Orthodox, who have been held hostage in Syria for some time. "May merciful God touch the heart of their abductors and grant the release of our brothers as soon as possible, so they may return to their communities. I invite you all to pray, remembering too the other people held hostage around the world", said the Holy Father.

Finally, addressing the young people celebrating their Jubilee, he said, "Now take home with you the joy of your Christian identity. Hold you head high, with your Christian identity card in your hand and in your heart. May the Lord accompany you, and please, pray for me too. Thank you".