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## **The Pope's words at the Regina Coeli prayer**

### **Before the Regina Coeli**

### **After the Regina Coeli**

At midday today, Fifth Sunday of Easter, the Holy Father Francis appeared at the window of his study in the Vatican Apostolic Palace to pray the *Regina Coeli* with the faithful and pilgrims gathered in St. Peter's Square.

The following is the Pope's introduction to the Marian prayer:

### **Before the Regina Coeli**

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning!

Yesterday evening I returned from my pilgrimage to Fátima – let us greet Our Lady of Fátima! – and our Marian prayer today assumes a particular meaning, full of memories and prophecy for those who look at history with the eyes of faith. In Fátima I immersed myself in the prayer of the holy faithful People, prayer that has flowed there for a hundred years like a river, to implore Mary's maternal protection for the whole world. I thank the Lord Who granted me the opportunity to go to the feet of the Virgin Mother as a *pilgrim of hope and of peace*. And I offer heartfelt thanks to the bishops, the bishop of Leiria-Fátima, the State authorities, the President of the Republic and all those who offered their collaboration.

From the beginning, when in the Chapel of the Apparitions I stayed a long time in silence, accompanied by the prayerful silence of all the pilgrims, a close and contemplative atmosphere was created, in which the various moments of prayer took place. And at the centre of it all there was the Risen Lord, present in the midst of His People in the Word and in the Eucharist. Present amid the many sick people, who are protagonists of the liturgical and pastoral life of Fátima, as in every Marian shrine.

In Fátima the Virgin chose the innocent heart and the simplicity of little Francisco, Jacinta and Lucia as the depository of her message. These children received it worthily, so as to be recognised as trustworthy witnesses of the apparitions, and to become models of Christian life. With the canonization of Francisco and Jacinta, I wished to offer to all the Church their example of following Christ and of evangelical witness, and I also wished to propose to the Church to care for children. Their holiness is not a consequence of the apparitions, but of the fidelity and ardour with which they responded to the privilege of being able to see the Virgin Mary. After their encounter with the “beautiful Lady”, as they called her, they frequently prayed the Rosary, made penance and offered sacrifices to obtain an end to war, and for those souls most in need of divine mercy.

And today, too, there is a great need for prayer and penance to implore the grace of conversion, to implore an end to so many wars that are everywhere in the world, and that are increasingly spreading, as well as an end to the absurd conflicts, large and small, that disfigure the face of humanity.

Let us allow ourselves to be guided by the light that comes from Fátima. May the Immaculate Heart of Mary always be our refuge, our consolation and the way that leads us to Christ.

### **After the Regina Coeli**

Dear brothers and sisters,

I entrust to Mary, Queen of Peace, the fate of the peoples afflicted by wars and conflicts, especially in the Middle East. Many innocent people suffer harsh trials – Christians, Muslims and those belonging to minorities, such as the Yazidi, who endure tragic violence and discrimination. My solidarity is accompanied by remembrance in prayer, while I thank those who make efforts to meet their humanitarian needs. I encourage the different communities to follow the path of dialogue and social friendship, to build a future of respect, security and peace, far from any type of war.

Yesterday, in Dublin, the Jesuit priest John Sullivan was proclaimed Blessed. He lived in Ireland between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and devoted his life to teaching and the spiritual formation of the young, and was greatly loved and sought after as a father to the poor and the suffering. Let us thank God for his witness.

I greet you all, faithful of Rome and pilgrims from Italy and various countries. In particular, the faithful of Ivrea, Salerno, Valmontone and Rimini; students from Potenza and di Mozzo, Bergamo. I greet the participants in the “Passeggini vuoti” (“Empty strollers”) initiative and the group of mothers from Bordighera: the future of our societies demands of everyone, especially institutions, concrete attention to life and motherhood. And this appeal is especially meaningful today, as we celebrate Mothers’ Day in many countries. Let us remember all mothers with affection and gratitude, including our mothers in heaven, entrusting them to Mary, the Mother of Jesus. And now I would like to make a suggestion: let us remain a few moments in silence, each one of us praying for his or her mother.

I wish you all a good Sunday. Please, do not forget to pray for me. Have a good lunch, and goodbye.

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