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The Pope's words at the Regina Coeli prayer

Before the Regina Coeli

After the Regina Coeli

At midday today, Sixth 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, which substitutes the Angelus at Easter time:

Before the Regina Coeli

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning!

Today's Gospel (cf. John 14:15-21), the continuation of last Sunday's, takes us to the moving and dramatic moment of Jesus' Last Supper with His disciples. John the Evangelist receives from the Lord's mouth and heart His last teachings, before His Passion and Death. Jesus promises His friends, in that sad, dark moment, that, after Him, they will receive "another Paraclete" (v. 16). This word means another "Advocate," another Defender, another Consoler: "the Spirit of truth" (v. 17); and He adds "I will not leave you desolate; I will come to you" (v. 18). These words transmit the joy of a new coming of Christ: risen and glorified, He abides in the Father and, at the same time, comes to us in the Holy Spirit. And in this, His new coming, our union with Him and with the Father is revealed: "In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you" (v. 20).

Meditating on these words of Jesus, today with a sense of faith we are aware of being the People of God in communion with the Father and with Jesus through the Holy Spirit. In this mystery of communion the Church finds the inexhaustible source of her mission, which is realized through love. In today's Gospel Jesus says: "He who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me; and he who loves me will be loved by my

Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him” (v. 21). It is the love that introduces us to the knowledge of Jesus, thanks to the action of this “Advocate” that Jesus has sent, that is, the Holy Spirit. Love of God and of our neighbour is the Gospel’s greatest commandment. The Lord calls us today to respond generously to the evangelical call for love, putting God at the centre of our life and dedicating ourselves to the service of our brethren, especially those who are most in need of support and consolation.

If there is an attitude that is never easy, that is never to be taken for granted, even in a Christian community, it is indeed being able to love, to love following the example of the Lord and with His grace. At times conflicts, pride, envy and divisions also leave a sign on the Church’s beautiful face. A community of Christians should live in Christ’s charity and, instead, it is in fact precisely there that the evil one “puts his paw” and we, sometimes, allow ourselves to be deceived. The spiritually weakest are those who pay the price. How many of them – and you know some of them – how many of them have drifted away because they do not feel welcomed, they do not feel understood, they do not feel loved. How many persons have drifted, for instance, from some parishes or communities because of the environment of gossip, jealousy and envy they have found there. For a Christian too to be able to love is never something that is achieved once and for all. One must begin again every day; we must exercise ourselves so that our love for the brothers and sisters we encounter may become mature and purified of those limits and sins that render it partial, egoistic, sterile and unfaithful. Every day the art of loving must be learned. Listen to this: every day the art of loving must be learned; every day Christ’s school of patience must be followed, every day one must forgive and look to Jesus, and do so with the help of this “Advocate,” of this Consoler that Jesus has sent us, the Holy Spirit.

May the Virgin Mary, perfect disciple of her Son and Lord, help us to be ever more obedient to the Paraclete, the Spirit of truth, to learn every day to love one another as Jesus has loved us.

After the Regina Coeli

Dear brothers and sisters,

Unfortunately, painful news reaches us from the Central African Republic, which I hold in my heart, especially after my visit in November 2015. Armed clashes have claimed numerous victims and displaced many people, and threaten the peace process. I am close to the population and to the bishops and to all those who work for the good of the people and for peaceful coexistence. I pray for the deceased and wounded, and renew my appeal: may weapons be silenced and the good will to engage in dialogue prevail, so as to bring peace and development to the country.

Next May 24 we will all be united spiritually to the Catholic faithful of China, on the feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary “Help of Christians,” venerated at the Sheshan Shrine at Shanghai. To Chinese Catholics I say: let us raise our gaze to Mary Our Mother, so that she may help us to discern the Will of God regarding the concrete path of the Church in China and support us in accepting her plan of love with generosity. Mary encourages us to offer our personal contribution towards communion among believers and for the harmony of the society as a whole. Let us not forget to bear witness to faith with prayer and with love, always remaining open to encounter and dialogue.

I address a warm greeting to you, faithful of Rome and pilgrims, especially to the Musical Chapel of the Cathedral of Pamplona; to the group from the *Colégio São Tomás* of Lisbon; to the faithful of Saint Charles’ Chapel of the Hospital *de la Croix Saint-Simon* Paris; and those from Torrent (Valencia, Spain), Canada, and the United States of America, including some from the Island of Guam.

A special greeting goes to the newly-confirmed youngsters and candidates for Confirmation from the diocese of Genoa – with God’s help I will come to visit your city next Saturday – and to the “ladybirds” of Frosinone and the faithful of the *Santa Maria Goretti* parish in Rome.

Dear brothers and sisters,

I wish to announce that on Wednesday 28 June a Consistory will be held to appoint five new Cardinals. Their provenance from different parts of the world manifests the catholicity of the Church, which reaches all around the earth, and the assignment of a title or a diaconate in the city expresses the Cardinals' belonging to the diocese of Rome that, according to the well-known expression of Saint Ignatius, presides in charity over all the Churches. And on Thursday 29 June, Solemnity of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, I will concelebrate Holy Mass with the new Cardinals, with the College of Cardinals, with the new Bishops, the Metropolitans, the Bishops and some presbyters.

Here are the names of the new cardinals: Msgr. Jean Zerbo, archbishop of Bamako, in Mali; Msgr. Juan Jose Omella, archbishop of Barcelona, Spain; Msgr. Anders Arborelius, bishop of Stockholm, Sweden; Msgr. Louis-Marie Ling Mangkhanekhoun, titular bishop of Acque Nuove di Proconsolare, apostolic vicar of Pakse, in Laos; and Msgr. Gregorio Rosa Chavez, titular bishop of Mulli, auxiliary of the archdiocese of San Salvador, El Salvador.

Let us commend the new Cardinals to the protection of Saints Peter and Paul, so that by the intercession of the Prince of the Apostles, they may be genuine servants of ecclesial communion, and by that of the Apostle to the Gentiles, may be joyful heralds of the Gospel throughout the world and, with their testimony and their counsel, they may support me more intensely in my service as Bishop of Rome, universal Pastor of the Church.

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