



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

REGINA CAELI

*Saint Peter's Square
Easter Monday, 6 April 2015*

[Multimedia]

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good morning and Happy Easter,

On this Easter Monday the Gospel (cf. Mt 28:8-15) presents to us the narrative of the women who, on arriving at Jesus' tomb, find it empty and see an Angel who announces to them that He is risen. And as they run to tell this news to the disciples, they encounter Jesus himself who says to them: "Go and tell my brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see me" (v. 10). Galilee is the "periphery" where Jesus began his preaching; and from there He will share the Gospel of the Resurrection, for it to be proclaimed to all, and that everyone might encounter Him, the Risen One, present and working in history. Today too He is with us, here in the Square.

This, therefore, is the proclamation that the Church repeats from the first day: "*Christ is risen!*". And, in Him, through Baptism, we too are risen, we have passed from death to life, from the slavery of sin to the freedom of love. Behold the Good News that we are called to take to others and to every place, inspired by the Holy Spirit. Faith in the Resurrection of Jesus and the hope that He brought us is the most beautiful gift that the Christian can and must give to his brothers. To all and to each, therefore, let us not tire of saying: Christ is risen! Let us repeat it all together, today here in the Square: Christ is risen! Let us repeat it with words, but above all with the witness of our lives. The happy news of the Resurrection should shine on our faces, in our feelings and attitudes, in the way we treat others.

We proclaim the Resurrection of Christ when his light illuminates the dark moments of our life and

we can share that with others: when we know how to smile with those who smile and weep with those who weep; when we walk beside those who are sad and in danger of losing hope; when we recount our experience of faith with those who are searching for meaning and for happiness. With our attitude, with our witness, with our life, we say: Jesus is risen! Let us say it with all our soul.

We are in days of the Easter Octave, during which the joyful atmosphere of the Resurrection accompanies us. It's curious how the Liturgy considers the entire Octave as one single day, in order to help us centre into the Mystery, so that his grace may impress itself on our hearts and our lives. Easter is the event that brought radical news for every human being, for history and for the world: the triumph of life over death; it is the feast of reawakening and of rebirth. Let us allow our lives to be conquered and transformed by the Resurrection!

Let us ask the Virgin Mother, the silent witness of the death and Resurrection of her Son, to foster the growth of Paschal joy in us. Let us do it now with the recitation of the Regina Caeli, which in the Easter Season substitutes the prayer of the Angelus. In this prayer, expressed by the Alleluia, we turn to Mary inviting her to rejoice, because the One whom she carried in her womb is Risen as He promised, and we entrust ourselves to her intercession. In fact, our joy is a reflection of Mary's joy, for it is she who guarded and guards with faith the events of Jesus. Let us therefore recite this prayer with the emotion of children who are happy because their mother is happy.

After the Regina Caeli:

In this beautiful Easter climate, I cordially greet all of you, dear pilgrims from Italy and various parts of the world to participate in this moment of prayer. In particular, I am delighted to welcome a Delegation from the Shalom Movement, who have arrived at the last stage of their solidarity relay to raise public awareness concerning the persecution of Christians around the world. The itinerary of your travels is over, but the spiritual journey of intense prayer must continue for everyone, our concrete participation and tangible help in the defence and protection of our brothers and sisters, who are being persecuted, exiled, killed, decapitated for the sole reason that they are Christian. They are our martyrs of today, and they are so many, we could say that they are more numerous than in the early centuries. I hope that the international community will not remain mute and inert before such an unacceptable crime, which is a worrying deviation from the most basic human rights. I sincerely hope that the international community does not turn a blind eye to this.

I hope that each of you may live in joy and serenity this Week throughout which the joy of the Resurrection of Christ extends. In order to live this time more intensely — and I constantly return to this very point — it will do us good to read a passage of the Gospel every day about the event of the Resurrection. Every day a little passage.

A happy and holy Easter to you all! Please, do not forget to pray for me. Have a good lunch and

arrivederci!

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