



The Holy See

**MESSAGE OF THE HOLY FATHER
TO PILGRIMS FROM THE DIOCESE OF RIETI (ITALY)**

Dear brothers and sisters of the diocese of Rieti,

I joyfully greet your Bishop Vito Piccinonna, and with him, every one of you: priests, deacons, consecrated persons, those who have civil responsibilities, all the faithful and especially those who are sick and elderly, offering prayers and sufferings for the good of the Church.

I hope that the visit to the tombs of the Apostles and the passage through the Holy Door may strengthen your faith and help you increasingly to understand and welcome God's love, the source and reason for real joy. Above all, we are called to bear witness to the weakest and most in need of this love that, like a living flame, gives force to the path of life.

With these sentiments, I encourage you to be witnesses of hope every day in the various ecclesial and existential environments in which you live, to contribute to the edification of a more fraternal and solidarity-based world and, while I ask you to continue to pray for me, I invoke upon you the maternal protection of the Virgin Mary and Saint Barbara, and heartily impart the Apostolic Blessing, which I extend to the entire diocesan community of Rieti.

From the Vatican, 29 March

FRANCIS

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