



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS
TO THE PILGRIMAGE PROMOTED BY THE
SCANDINAVIAN BISHOPS' CONFERENCE**

*Audience Hall
Monday, 3 February 2025*

[Multimedia]

*Your Eminence,
Dear Brother Bishops,
Dear friends,*

I am pleased to greet all of you from Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland and Iceland, on the occasion of your pilgrimage to Rome, organized by the Nordic Bishop's Conference.

Through this experience of journeying together as brothers and sisters in Christ, I pray that your hearts will grow strong in *faith, hope* and *love*, for they are the three essential elements of Christian life, three ways in which the Holy Spirit guides us on our journey, and on our pilgrimage, for we are all pilgrims (cf. [General Audience](#), 24 April 2024).

The motto of this Jubilee, as you know well, is "Pilgrims of Hope". It is my prayer, then, that your *hope* will be strengthened during these days. You are surely already aware of signs of hope in your home countries, for the Church in your lands, while small, is growing in numbers. It always grows. We can thank Almighty God that the seeds of faith planted and watered there by generations of persevering pastors and people is bearing fruit. Nor should this surprise us, because God is always faithful to his promises!

As you visit the various holy sites in the Eternal City, especially the tombs of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, I also pray that your *faith* in the Lord Jesus, and your awareness of belonging to

him and to one another in the communion of the Church, will be nourished and deepened. In this way, with minds and hearts attuned more fully to Christ's transforming grace, you will be able to return to your countries full of joyful enthusiasm for sharing the great gift that you have received, for, as Saint Paul tells us, we have been created in Christ for doing good works (cf. *Eph 2:8-10*).

Indeed, there can be no greater "work" than transmitting the saving message of the Gospel to others, and we are called to do this especially for those on the margins. Here, perhaps you can think of those who may be lonely or isolated – so many people are isolated or lonely – at heart or on the peripheries of your communities and more far-flung territories. Moreover, this task is entrusted to each of you, whatever your age, state in life or abilities. Even those of you who are elderly, sick or struggling in some way have a noble vocation to bear witness to the compassionate and tender love of the Father.

As you return home, then, please remember that a pilgrimage does not end but shifts its focus to the daily "pilgrimage of discipleship" and the call to persevere in the task of evangelization. In this regard, I would encourage your vibrant Catholic communities to cooperate with your fellow Christians, for in these challenging times, scarred by war in Europe and around the world, how much our human family needs a unified witness to the reconciliation, healing and peace that can come only from God.

Likewise, in your multi-cultural contexts, you are called to dialogue and work together with the followers of other religions, many of them migrants whom you have welcomed so well into your societies. Indeed, I recall seeing this at first hand during my visit to Sweden in 2016. And for us Latin American countries, in the times of dictatorships – in Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, Argentina – our brothers and sisters fleeing dictatorships went there. Please carry on being beacons of welcome and fraternal solidarity!

Finally, a word to the younger pilgrims among you. As part of this year's events, on 27 April we will celebrate the Canonization of Blessed Carlo Acutis. This young saint of and for our times shows you, and all of us, how possible it is in today's world for young people to follow Jesus, share his teachings with others, and so find the fullness of life in joy, freedom and holiness. So allow me to repeat to you, and please share these words of the Pope with your young friends at home: "May the Holy Spirit urge you on... The Church needs your momentum, your intuitions, your faith. We need them!" (*Christus Vivit*, 299)

Dear friends, with these brief words, I wish you well for your pilgrimage, and for your lives, and entrust you to the intercession of Mary, Mother of the Church. I give you my heartfelt blessing. And, please, do not forget to pray for me.
