



The Holy See

URBI ET ORBI MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

EASTER 2015

*Central loggia of the Vatican Basilica
Sunday, 5 April 2015*

[Multimedia]

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Happy Easter!

Jesus Christ is risen!

Love has triumphed over hatred, life has conquered death, light has dispelled the darkness!

Out of love for us, Jesus Christ stripped himself of his divine glory, emptied himself, took on the form of a slave and humbled himself even to death, death on a cross. For this reason God exalted him and made him Lord of the universe. Jesus is Lord!

By his death and resurrection, Jesus shows everyone *the way* to life and happiness: this way is *humility*, which involves *humiliation*. This is the path which leads to glory. *Only those who humble themselves can go towards the "things that are above", towards God* (cf. Col 3:1-4). The proud look "down from above"; the humble look "up from below".

On Easter morning, alerted by the women, Peter and John ran to the tomb. They found it open and empty. Then they drew near and "*bent down*" in order to enter it. To enter into the mystery, we need to "bend down", to abase ourselves. Only those who abase themselves understand the glorification of Jesus and are able to follow him on his way.

The world proposes that we put ourselves forward at all costs, that we compete, that we prevail... But Christians, by the grace of Christ, dead and risen, are *the seeds of another humanity*, in which we seek to live in service to one another, not to be arrogant, but rather respectful and ready to

help.

This *is not weakness, but true strength!* Those who bear within them God's power, his love and his justice, do not need to employ violence; they speak and act with the power of truth, beauty and love.

From the risen Lord we ask today the grace not to succumb to the pride which fuels violence and war, but to have the humble courage of pardon and peace. We ask Jesus, the Victor over death, to lighten the sufferings of our many brothers and sisters who are persecuted for his name, and of all those who suffer injustice as a result of ongoing conflicts and violence. There are so many of them!

We ask for peace, above all, for beloved Syria and Iraq, that the roar of arms may cease and that peaceful relations may be restored among the various groups which make up those beloved countries. May the international community not stand by before the immense humanitarian tragedy unfolding in these countries and the drama of the numerous refugees.

We pray for peace for all the peoples of the Holy Land. May the culture of encounter grow between Israelis and Palestinians and the peace process be resumed, in order to end years of suffering and division.

We implore peace for Libya, that the present absurd bloodshed and all barbarous acts of violence may cease, and that all concerned for the future of the country may work to favour reconciliation and to build a fraternal society respectful of the dignity of the person. For Yemen too we express our hope for the growth of a common desire for peace, for the good of the entire people.

At the same time, in hope we entrust to the merciful Lord the framework recently agreed to in Lausanne, that it may be a definitive step toward a more secure and fraternal world.

We ask the risen Lord for the gift of peace for Nigeria, South Sudan and for the various areas of Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. May constant prayer rise up from all people of goodwill for those who lost their lives – for those killed last Thursday at Garissa University College in Kenya –, for all who have been kidnapped, and for those forced to abandon their homes and their dear ones.

May the Lord's resurrection bring light to beloved Ukraine, especially to those who have endured the violence of the conflict of recent months. May the country rediscover peace and hope thanks to the commitment of all interested parties.

We ask for peace and freedom for the many men and women subject to old and new forms of enslavement on the part of criminal individuals and groups. Peace and liberty for the victims of

drug dealers, who are often allied with the powers who ought to defend peace and harmony in the human family. And we ask peace for this world subjected to arms dealers, who profit from the blood of men and women.

May the marginalized, the imprisoned, the poor and the migrants who are so often rejected, maltreated and discarded, the sick and the suffering, children, especially those who are victims of violence; all who today are in mourning, and all men and women of goodwill, hear the consoling and healing voice of the Lord Jesus: "Peace to you!" (*Lk 24:36*). "Fear not, for I am risen and I shall always be with you" (cf. Roman Missal, Entrance Antiphon for Easter Day).

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Dear brothers and sisters,

I wish to extend my best wishes for a Happy Easter to all of you who have come to this square from various countries, as well as those connected via social media. Carry to those in your homes and whomever you meet the joyful news that the Lord of Life has risen, bringing with him love, justice, respect and forgiveness!

Thank you for your presence, for your prayers and for the zeal of your faith. A special and grateful thought goes for the gift of flowers, which this year have come from The Netherlands. Happy Easter to everyone!