



The Holy See

PRAYER VIGIL
FOR THE 19TH "MEMORIAL AND COMMITMENT DAY"
SPONSORED BY THE "LIBERA" FOUNDATION OF FR. LUIGI CIOTTI

ADDRESS OF POPE FRANCIS

*Church of "San Gregorio VII", Rome
Friday, 21 March 2014*

Video

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Thank you for making this stop in Rome, which gives me the opportunity to meet with you before the vigil and the “Day of remembrance and commitment” which you will celebrate tonight and tomorrow in Latina. I thank Don Luigi Ciotti and his collaborators, as well as the Franciscan fathers of this parish. I also greet Bishop Crociata of Latina who is present here. Thank you, Your Excellency.

I feel the desire to share with you *a hope*, and it is this: that *the sense of responsibility may little by little overcome corruption* in every part of the world.... And this must begin from within, from the conscience, and from there restore and rehabilitate behaviour, relationships, choices, the social fabric, so that justice may gain space, broaden, take root and replace inequity.

I know that you feel this hope strongly, and I want to share it with you, to tell you that I will be close to you also on this night and tomorrow in Latina — though I cannot come in person, I am with you on this journey, which requires tenacity and perseverance.

In particular, I wish to express my *solidarity to those of you who have lost a loved one*, victims of mafia violence. Thank you for your witness, because you have not closed yourselves off, you have opened yourselves, you have come out to tell your story of pain and hope. This is so important,

especially for young people!

I would like to pray with you — and I do it from the heart — for all the victims of the mafia. Just a few days ago, close to Taranto, there was a crime that was merciless, not even sparing a child. But at the same time let us pray together, all together, to ask for *the strength to go forward*, not to be discouraged, but to *continue to fight against corruption*.

And I feel that I cannot conclude without saying a word to the absent bosses today, to those absent but central figures: the men and women of the mafia. Please, change your lives, convert, stop, cease to do evil! We are praying for you. Convert, I ask it on my knees; it is for your own good. This life you are living now, it won't bring you pleasure, it won't give you joy, it won't bring you happiness. The power, the money, that you possess now from so many dirty transactions, from so many mafia crimes, is blood-stained money, it is power soaked in blood, and you cannot take it with you to the next life. Convert, there is still time, so that you don't end up in hell. That is what awaits you if you continue on this path. You had a father and a mother: think of them. Cry a little and convert.

Let us pray together to our Mother Mary that she help us: *Hail Mary...*