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Pope's Holy Week message: 'Creativity of love can overcome isolation'

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Pope's Holy Week message: 'Creativity of love can overcome isolation'

Pope Francis sends a video message as Christians around the world prepare to celebrate Holy Week in an unusual manner due to the Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic.

By Devin Watkins

"This evening I have the chance to enter your homes in a different way than usual."

That was how Pope Francis opened his video message sent on Friday ahead of Holy Week 2020.

He noted how difficult and full of suffering these weeks have been for the many people whose lives have been affected by Covid-19. "I can imagine you in your families, living an unusual life to avoid contagion."

Stuck and alone

The Pope said he was thinking about children and young people stuck at home, those who have to face these difficult moments alone, and the elderly.

"I have in my heart all the families," he said, "especially those who have a loved one who is sick or who have unfortunately experienced mourning due to the coronavirus or other causes."

Countless heroes

Pope Francis expressed his appreciation for the "generosity of those who put themselves at risk for the treatment of this pandemic or to guarantee the essential services to society."

He called them "heroes."

The Pope said he is also thinking about those facing financial difficulties, those in prison worried about themselves and their families, and the homeless, who have no home to protect them.

"It is a difficult time for everyone. For many, very difficult."

Love creatively to help others

The Pope said he is aware of all the suffering in the world right now. He sought to tell everyone of his closeness and affection, and offered a word of advice.

“Let us try, if we can, to make the best use of this time: let us be generous. Let us help those in need in our neighborhood. Let us look out for the loneliest people, perhaps by telephone or social networks. Let us pray to the Lord for those who are in difficulty in Italy and in the world.”

Despite the isolation imposed by social distancing measures, “thought and spirit can go far with the creativity of love,” said Pope Francis.

Boundless love and hope

He acknowledged that Christians will celebrate Holy Week “in a truly unusual way” and added that this week sums of the message of the Gospel: “God’s boundless love.”

“And in the silence of our cities, the Easter Gospel will resound,” he said. “In the risen Jesus, life conquered death.”

Hope, said the Pope, is nourished by our Paschal faith.

“It is the hope of a better time, in which we can be better, finally freed from evil and from this pandemic,” he said. “It is a hope: hope does not disappoint. It is not an illusion, it is a hope.”

Gesture of tenderness from the Pope

He urged everyone to prepare a better time “in love and patience” with the extra time alone that has been given us.

Closing his message, the Pope asked everyone watching to make “a gesture of tenderness towards those who suffer, towards children, and towards the elderly.”

“Tell them that the Pope is close,” he said, “and pray that the Lord will soon deliver us all from evil.”

The official translation of the Pope’s video message is below:

Dear friends, good evening!

This evening I have the chance to enter your homes in a different way than usual. If you allow me, I would like to have a conversation with you for a few moments, in this time of difficulty and of suffering. I can imagine you in your families, living an unusual life to avoid contagion. I am thinking of the liveliness of children and young people, who cannot go out, attend school, live their lives. I have in my heart all the families, especially those who

have a loved one who is sick or who have unfortunately experienced mourning due to the coronavirus or other causes. These days I often think about people who are alone, and for whom it is more difficult to face these moments. Above all I think of the elderly, who are very dear to me.

I cannot forget those who are sick with coronavirus, people who are in hospital. I am aware of the generosity of those who put themselves at risk for the treatment of this pandemic or to guarantee the essential services to society. So many heroes, every day, at every hour! I also remember how many are in financial straits and are worried about work and the future. A thought also goes out to prison inmates, whose pain is compounded by fear of the epidemic, for themselves and their loved ones; I think of the homeless, who do not have a home to protect them.

It is a difficult time for everyone. For many, very difficult. The Pope knows this and, with these words, he wants to tell everyone of his closeness and affection. Let us try, if we can, to make the best use of this time: let us be generous; let us help those in need in our neighbourhood; let us look out for the loneliest people, perhaps by telephone or social networks; let us pray to the Lord for those who are in difficulty in Italy and in the world. Even if we are isolated, thought and spirit can go far with the creativity of love. This is what we need today: the creativity of love. This is what is needed today: the creativity of love.

We will celebrate Holy Week in a truly unusual way, which manifests and sums up the message of the Gospel, that of God's boundless love. And in the silence of our cities, the Easter Gospel will resound. The Apostle Paul says: "And He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves, but for Him Who died for them and was raised again" (2 Cor 5:15). In the risen Jesus, life conquered death. This Paschal faith nourishes our hope. I would like to share it with you this evening. It is the hope of a better time, in which we can be better, finally freed from evil and from this pandemic. It is a hope: hope does not disappoint; it is not an illusion, it is a hope.

Beside each other, in love and patience, we can prepare a better time in these days. Thank you for allowing me into your homes. Make a gesture of tenderness towards those who suffer, towards children, and towards the elderly. Tell them that the Pope is close and pray, that the Lord will soon deliver us all from evil. And you, pray for me. Have a good dinner. See you soon!

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