



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS

REGINA CAELI

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Sunday, 3 May 2020 [\[Multimedia\]](#)

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good Morning,

The fourth Sunday of Easter, which we celebrate today, is dedicated to Jesus the Good Shepherd. The Gospel says that: “The sheep *hear his voice*, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out” (Jn 10:3). The Lord calls us by name, He calls us because he loves us. However, the Gospel says, there are *other voices*, that are not to be followed: those of strangers, thieves and brigands who mean harm to the sheep.

These different voices resonate within us. There is the voice of God, who speaks kindly to the conscience, and there is the tempting voice that leads to evil. How can we recognise the voice of the Good Shepherd from that of the thief, how can we distinguish the inspiration of God from the suggestion of the evil one? One can learn to discern these two voices: they speak two different languages, that is, they have opposite ways of knocking on [the door of] our hearts. They speak different languages. Just as we know how to distinguish one language from another, we can also distinguish the voice of God from the voice of the evil one.

The voice of God never forces us: God *proposes* himself, He does not *impose* himself. Instead, the evil voice seduces, assails, forces: it arouses dazzling illusions, emotions that are tempting but transient. At first it flatters, it makes us believe that we are all-powerful, but then it leaves us empty inside and accuses us: “You are worth nothing”. The voice of God, instead, corrects us, with great patience, but always encourages us, consoles us: it always nourishes hope. God’s voice is a voice that has a horizon, whereas the voice of the evil one leads you to a wall, it backs you into a corner.

Another difference: the voice of the enemy distracts us from the present and wants us to focus on fears of the future or sadness about the past — the enemy does not want the present — it brings

to surface the bitterness, the memories of the wrongs suffered, of those who have hurt us, ... many bad memories. On the other hand, the voice of God speaks in the present: "Now you can do good, now you can exercise the creativity of love, now you can forego the regrets and remorse that hold your heart captive". It inspires us, it leads us ahead, but it speaks in the present: now.

Again: the two voices raise different questions in us. The one that comes from God will be: "What is good for me?". Instead the tempter will insist on another question: "What do I feel like doing?". What do I feel: the evil voice always revolves around the ego, its impulses, its needs, *everything straight away*. It is like a child's tantrums: everything, and now. The voice of God, however, never promises joy at a low price: it invites us to go beyond our ego in order to find the true, good peace. Let us remember: evil never brings peace. First it causes frenzy, and then it leaves bitterness. This is the style of evil.

Lastly, God's voice and that of the tempter, speak in different "environments": the enemy prefers darkness, falsehood, and gossip; the Lord loves sunlight, truth, and sincere transparency. The enemy will say to us: "Close yourself up in yourself, besides no one understands and listens to you, do not be trusting!" Goodness, on the contrary, invites us to open up, to be clear and trusting in God and in others. Dear brothers and sisters, during this time many thoughts and worries lead us to turn inwards into ourselves. Let us pay attention to the voices that reach our hearts. Let us ask ourselves where they come from. Let us ask for the grace to recognise and follow the voice of the Good Shepherd, who brings us out of the enclosures of selfishness and leads us to the pastures of true freedom. May Our Lady, Mother of Good Counsel, guide and accompany our discernment.

After the Regina Caeli, the Holy Father continued:

Dear brothers and sisters,

Today we celebrate World Day of Prayer for Vocations. Christian life is always a response to God's call, in any living condition. This Day reminds us of what Jesus said one day, that the field of the Kingdom of God requires much work, and we must pray the Father to send labourers to work in his harvest (cf. Mt 9:37-38). Priesthood and consecrated life require courage and perseverance; and one cannot continue along this path without prayer. I invite everyone to invoke the Lord for the gift of good workers for his Kingdom, with a heart and hands that are open to his love.

Once again I would like to express my closeness to those who are suffering from Covid-19, to those who are dedicated to their care and to all those who, in any way, are suffering from the pandemic. At the same time, I would like to support and encourage the international cooperation that is launching various initiatives aimed at responding adequately and effectively to the serious crisis we are experiencing. Indeed, it is important to bring together scientific capabilities, in a

transparent and disinterested way, in order to find vaccines and treatments and to guarantee universal access to essential technologies that will enable every infected person, in every part of the world, to receive the necessary health care.

I offer a special thought to the “Meter” Association, promoter of the National Day for children victims of violence, exploitation and indifference. I encourage those in charge and the staff to continue their prevention and awareness raising work alongside the various educational agencies. And I thank the children from the Association who have sent me a collage with hundreds of daisies they coloured. Thank you!

We have just started May, the quintessential Marian month, during which the faithful love to visit the Shrines dedicated to Our Lady. This year, because of the health situation, let us visit these places of faith and devotion spiritually, to place in the heart of the Blessed Virgin our worries, expectations and plans for the future.

And since prayer is a universal value, I have accepted the proposal of the Higher Committee for Human Fraternity for believers of all religions to unite spiritually this 14 May for a day of prayer, fasting, and works of charity, to implore God to help humanity overcome the coronavirus pandemic. Remember: 14 May, all believers together, believers of different traditions, to pray, fast, and perform works of charity.

I wish everyone a good Sunday. Please do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch. *Arrivederci*.