



The Holy See

SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

ACT OF VENERATION TO THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION AT THE SPANISH STEPS PRAYER OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

Spanish Steps

Saturday, 8 December 2018

[Multimedia]

Immaculate Mother,
on the day of your celebration, so dear to the Christian people,
I come to pay you homage in the heart of Rome.
In my soul I carry the faithful of this Church
and all those who live in this city, especially the sick and those who due to various circumstances
struggle harder to go on.

First and foremost we wish to thank you for the motherly care with which you accompany our journey:
how often we hear those who have experienced your intercession describe with teary eyes
the graces that you request for us from your Son Jesus!
I also think of an ordinary grace that you give to the people who live in Rome:
that of patiently facing the discomforts of daily life.
For this we ask you for the strength not to give in, but rather, to each do our part each day to
improve things,
so that each one's care may make Rome more beautiful and livable for every one;
so that each one's duty properly fulfilled may ensure the rights of every one.
And thinking of the common good of this city,
we pray to you for those who play roles of great responsibility: may you obtain for them wisdom,
foresight, the spirit of service and cooperation.

Blessed Virgin,

I wish to entrust to you in a particular way the priests of this Diocese: pastors, assistant pastors, elderly priests who, with a shepherd's heart, continue to work at the service of the People of God, the many student priests from every part of the world who cooperate in the parishes.

For all of them I ask you for the gentle joy of evangelizing and the gift of being fathers, close to the people, merciful.

To you, Lady wholly consecrated to God, I entrust the consecrated women in religious and in secular life who, thank God, are more numerous in Rome than in any other city in the world, and who form a marvelous mosaic of nationalities and cultures.

For them I ask you for the joy to be, like you, spouses and mothers, fruitful in prayer, in charity, in compassion.

O Mother of Jesus,

I ask of you one last thing in this Season of Advent,

reflecting on the days in which you and Joseph were in distress for the then imminent birth of your child,

concerned because there was the census and you too had to leave your town, Nazareth, and go to Bethlehem....

You know, Mother, what it means to carry life in your womb and to feel indifference, rejection, at times scorn around you.

For this reason I ask you to be close to families that today in Rome, in Italy, in the entire world, are experiencing similar situations, so that they not be abandoned to themselves, but protected in their rights, human rights which come before any other justifiable need.

O Mary Immaculate,

dawn of hope at the horizon of humanity,

watch over this city,

over its houses, over its schools, over its offices, over its shops,

over its factories, over its hospitals, over its prisons;

may no place lack the most valuable thing that Rome has, and which it preserves for the entire world, the testament of Jesus: "Love one another, as I have loved you" (cf. Jn 13:34).

Amen.