
Pope Francis: “wars and conflicts are harming the environment and dividing nations”

“Albeit at a distance, I follow the work of COP 28 in Dubai with great attention.” **Pope Francis** said this in a video message transmitted from Casa Santa Marta after his Sunday Angelus prayer. The message was read almost in its entirety by Monsignor Braida from the Secretariat of State: “I am close. I reiterate my appeal for a response to climate change with concrete political changes.” “Let us come out of the straits of particularism and nationalism, mindsets of the past, and embrace a common vision, all making every effort now, without delay, for a necessary global conversion.” **“Today too I will not be able to read everything”**, Francis said off text in his opening remarks, before the Marian prayer, speaking via a video connection like last Sunday, as he is recovering from a health condition. I am getting better, but my voice is still not good”, he continued in unscripted remarks, “Monsignor Braida will read the catechesis.” **A further token of his desire to be at the Dubai event, albeit from afar, is the video message he sent to mark the inauguration of the 'Faith Pavilion'**: “At the present time the world needs alliances that are not against someone, but in favour of everyone”, is the Pope’s appeal: “It is important that religions, without falling into the trap of syncretism, set a good example by working together: not for their own interests or those of one party, but for the interests of our world. Among these, the most important nowadays are peace and the climate.” “As religious representatives, let us set an example to show that change is possible and bear witness to respectful and sustainable lifestyles. With a loud voice, let us implore leaders of nations that our common home be preserved”, was the Pope’s exhortation to the religious leaders present: “In particular, young people and the poor, whose prayers reach the throne of the Most High, ask this of us.” “For their future and the future of all, let us safeguard creation and protect our common home; let us live in peace and promote peace!”, he concluded. **In the greeting read by Cardinal Parolin, the Pope reiterated the main points of the Sunday message at COP28.** “Protecting life entails opposing the rapacious illusion of omnipotence that is devastating our planet”, Francis said in his opening lines.

“The problem of climate change is also a religious problem”,

Francis remarked. “We need, urgently, to act for the sake of the environment. It is not enough merely to increase spending: we need to change our way of life and thus educate everyone to sober and fraternal lifestyles.” “This is an essential obligation for religions, which are called to teach contemplation, since creation is not only an ecosystem to preserve, but also a gift to embrace”, the Pope explained: “A world poor in contemplation will be a world polluted in soul, a world that will continue to discard people and produce waste. A world that lacks prayer will speak many words but, bereft of compassion and tears, will only live off a materialism made of money and weapons.” “Before our very eyes, we can see how wars and conflicts are harming the environment and dividing nations, hindering a common commitment to addressing shared problems like the protection of the planet”, the warning: “We recognize the extent to which peace and the stewardship of creation are interdependent. A home is only livable when a climate of peace reigns within. So it is for our earth, whose very soil seems to add its voice to those of the children and the poor who cry out to heaven pleading for peace!”. “Peacekeeping is also a task for the religions”, the Pope’s exhortation:

“may we not merely speak about peace, but take a stand against those who claim to be believers yet fuel hatred and do not oppose violence”.

The Pope renewed his appeals for peace after the Angelus prayer: “In Israel and Palestine the situation is serious. It pains us that the truce has been broken: this means death, destruction,

misery.” “Many hostages have been freed, but many are still in Gaza”, Francis continued: “Let us think about them, their families who had seen a light, a hope to embrace their loved ones again. In Gaza there is much suffering; there is a lack of basic necessities.” “I hope that all those who are involved may reach a new ceasefire agreement as soon as possible and find solutions other than weapons, trying to take courageous paths to peace”, is the Pope’s appeal, who assured his prayer for the victims of the attack that occurred on Sunday in the Philippines, where a bomb exploded during Mass. **“Today is International Day of Persons with Disabilities.** Welcoming and including those who experience this condition helps society as a whole to become more humane. In families, in parishes, in schools, at work, in sport: let us learn to value every person with his or her qualities and abilities, excluding no-one.” In his greeting to the Romans and pilgrims from Italy and other parts of the world, the Pope addressed in particular the Polish people “taking part in the events organized in Rome in honour of the Ulma martyr family, recently beatified.” “I wish you all a good Sunday and a good Advent journey”, Pope Francis read out after the Angelus prayer, along with the recitation of the Marian prayer and the imparting of his blessing to the faithful. In the catechesis, a “good programme” for Advent: “to encounter Jesus coming in every brother and sister who needs us and to share with them what we can: listening, time, concrete assistance.”

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