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IX WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

JUBILEE OF THE POOR

HOLY MASS

## **HOMILY OF POPE LEO XIV**

*St Peter's Basilica*

*33<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, 16 November 2025*

**[Multimedia]**

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*Dear brothers and sisters,*

The last Sundays of the liturgical year invite us to look to the ultimate end of history. In the first reading, the prophet Malachi sees the arrival of the “day of the Lord” as the beginning of a new era. It is described as God’s time, when, like a dawn that brings forth the sun of righteousness, the hopes of the poor and the humble will receive a final and definitive answer from the Lord, and the work of the wicked and their injustice, especially against the defenseless and the poor, will be eradicated and burned like straw.

This sun of righteousness that rises, as we know, is Jesus himself. The day of the Lord, in fact, is not only the last day of history; it is the Kingdom that draws near to every person in the Son of God who comes. In the Gospel, using the apocalyptic language typical of his time, Jesus announces and inaugurates this Kingdom. He himself is the power of God, who is present and active in the dramatic events of history. These events should not frighten the disciples, but enable them to persevere in their witness, for they know that Jesus’ promise is always alive and faithful: “Not a hair of your head will perish” (Lk 21:18).

Brothers and sisters, we are anchored in this hope, despite the sometimes unfortunate events of life. Even today, "the Church, 'like a stranger in a foreign land, presses forward amid the persecutions of the world and the consolations of God,' announcing the cross and death of the Lord until he comes" (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, 8). And when all human hope seems to be extinguished, this certainty, more constant than heaven and earth, becomes even stronger, for the Lord will not let even a hair of our head perish.

In the midst of persecution, suffering, struggles, and oppression in our personal lives and in society, God does not abandon us. He reveals himself as the One who takes our side. The Scriptures are woven with this golden thread that recounts the story of God, who is always on the side of the little ones, orphans, strangers and widows (cf. *Deut* 10:17-19). And in Jesus, his Son, God's closeness reaches the summit of love. For this reason, the presence and word of Christ become gladness and jubilee for the poorest, since he came to proclaim the good news to the poor and to preach the year of the Lord's favor (cf. *Lk* 4:18-19).

We too are participating in this year of grace in a special way today, as we celebrate, on this World Day, the Jubilee of the Poor. While the entire Church rejoices and exults, it is especially to you, dear brothers and sisters, that I want to proclaim the irrevocable words of the Lord Jesus himself: "*Dilexi te*, I have loved you" (*Rev* 3:9). Yes, before our smallness and poverty, God looks at us like no one else and loves us with eternal love. And his Church, even today, perhaps especially in our time, still wounded by old and new forms of poverty, hopes to be "mother of the poor, a place of welcome and justice" (Apostolic Exhortation *Dilexi Te*, 39).

So many forms of poverty oppress our world! First and foremost are material forms of poverty, but there are also many moral and spiritual situations of poverty, which often affect young people in a particular way. The tragedy that cuts across them all is loneliness. It challenges us to look at poverty in an integral way, because while it is certainly necessary at times to respond to urgent needs, we also must develop a culture of attention, precisely in order to break down the walls of loneliness. Let us, then, be attentive to others, to each person, wherever we are, wherever we live, transmitting this attitude within our families, living it out in the workplace and in academic environments, in different communities, in the digital world, everywhere, reaching out to the marginalized and becoming witnesses of God's tenderness.

Today, scenarios of war, unfortunately present in various regions of the world, seem especially to confirm that we are in a state of helplessness. Yet the globalization of helplessness arises from a lie, from believing that history has always been this way and cannot change. The Gospel, on the other hand, reminds us that it is precisely in the upheavals of history that the Lord comes to save us. And today, as a Christian community together with the poor, we must become a living sign of this salvation.

Poverty challenges Christians, but it also challenges all those who have positions of responsibility in society. I urge Heads of State and the leaders of nations to listen to the cry of the poorest. There can be no peace without justice, and the poor remind us of this in many ways, through migration as well as through their cries, which are often stifled by the myth of well-being and progress that does not take everyone into account, and indeed forgets many individuals, leaving them to their fate.

To charity workers, to so many volunteers, and to those who seek to alleviate the conditions of the poorest, I express my gratitude, and at the same time, my encouragement to continue to be the critical conscience of society. You know well that the question of the poor leads back to the essence of our faith, for they are the very flesh of Christ and not just a sociological category (cf. *Dilexi Te*, 110). This is why, "the Church, like a mother, accompanies those who are walking. Where the world sees threats, she sees children; where walls are built, she builds bridges" (*ibid.*, 75).

Let us all join together in this commitment. As the Apostle Paul wrote to the Christians of Thessalonica (cf. *2 Thess* 3:6-13): while awaiting the Lord's glorious return, we must not live a life closed in on ourselves, in a religious seclusion that isolates us from others and from history. On the contrary, seeking the Kingdom of God implies the desire to transform human coexistence into a space of fraternity and dignity for all, without exception. There is a constant danger of living like distracted wanderers, unconcerned about the final destination and uninterested in those who share the journey with us.

In this Jubilee of the Poor, let us be inspired by the witness of the saints who served Christ in the most needy and followed him on the path of humility and self-denial. In particular, I would like to mention Saint Benedict Joseph Labre, whose life as a "vagabond of God", characterizes him as the patron saint of the homeless. The Virgin Mary, through her *Magnificat*, continues to remind us of God's choices and has become the voice of those who have no voice. May Mary help us embrace the Kingdom's new way of thinking, so that in our Christian life the love of God, which welcomes, binds up wounds, forgives, consoles and heals, may always be present.

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# *The* HOLY SEE

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