

My dear children: may Jesus watch over my daughters and sons for me!

In my recent messages, I have referred to the need to pray for several intentions: for peace in the world (especially in the Holy Land, Ukraine and Russia), for the Church (during these days we are asking especially for Christian unity), and for the Work (the revising of the Statutes and the Work Weeks). Although I know that you are keeping these very much in mind, because we all feel that they are very much our own, in this first message of the year I would like to encourage you to intensify your prayer for these intentions.

“Prayer, this is our strength: we have never had any other weapon” (*Letter 17-VI-73*, no. 35). All the dimensions in our life can become a constant dialogue with God. Therefore, at any moment we can raise our requests to heaven. This is a reality that fills us with hope, because we know that, despite the difficulties in the world and our personal limitations, our Lord always listens to us. Only he can offer us deep joy, both in the adversities and the joyful moments that accompany us day after day.

Your Father blesses you with all his affection,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Leonardo". The script is cursive and fluid.

Rome, 22 January 2024