

President's message for Holy Easter 2024

24 March 2024

Dear colleagues, dear friends,

Holy Week begins! Every year we relive this time with the excitement of Jesus entering Jerusalem, the pain of his Crucifixion and the joy, finally, of the Resurrection.

We encounter many faces in the Gospel narrative: Judas, who betrays and does not trust in the Lord's forgiveness and hangs himself; Peter, who betrays, but defers to God's mercy. So also the two evildoers crucified beside Jesus: one continues to defy and insult him, the other recognises the Just One and asks for forgiveness. But Mary's face accompanies us in following Jesus: her silence, her heartbreaking pain, her tears, her hope hold our hands as we experience the Easter triduum.

I imagine Mary dressed not as she appears in our Good Friday processions, but with an apron, like the one our mothers and grandmothers wore: the apron of service and welcome. Yes, I imagine you wearing an apron because it is a concrete sign of daily service to life and conscious acceptance of God's will (*Ecce*).

If we too are, as doctors and as Christians, authentic servants of life (as our beloved Pope Francis exhorts us to be), let us stand with Mary at the foot of the Cross (*Stabat*), of any cross that afflicts humanity today (the victims of wars and persecutions, the migrants who die with difficulty on sea and land, the hungry and abandoned, the "discards" of our opulent societies); let us allow our disappointments and our tears to find consolation in Mary (she will never say to us "it is nothing", but will always say "I am with you"); let us trust in Mary in trials and in courageous witness, because she does not leave us alone and she always intercedes for us with her Son: "it is nothing", but she will always tell us "I am with you"); let us trust in Mary in our trials and courageous witness, because she does not leave us alone and always intercedes for us with her Son.

So, dear friends, Happy Holy Week, intensely lived in crossing the long night of the Cross to confidently reach the dawn of the Resurrection and rejoice with Mary (*Magnificat*).

Best wishes to you, to each one of you (I see your faces running through my mind, one by one), to your families, to your associations, to your sick people, and special good wishes with an extra burst of affection and prayer for the Ukrainian people and for all those in the world who seek and await peace, peace and peace.

I embrace you all.

Vincenzo Defilippis
FEAMC President