

## Pope Francis requests prayer and action for those “living on the margins of society”

- In [The Pope Video](#) for the month of September, Pope Francis asks us to pray “for those people who live on the margins of society in subhuman living conditions, that they may not be neglected by institutions and never be cast out.”
- **Pope Francis** asks, “How is it that we allow the ‘throwaway culture,’ in which millions of men and women are worth nothing compared to economic gods, to dominate our lives?”
- “Please,” the **Pope** implores, “let’s stop making invisible those who are on the margins of society, whether it’s due to poverty, addictions, mental illness or disability.”

(Vatican City, 29 August 2023) - “How could we have reached this level of indifference?” This is the question **Pope Francis** asks in [The Pope Video](#) for the month of September in which he asks us to pray “for people living on the margins” of society through the [Pope’s Worldwide Prayer Network](#). “A homeless person who dies on the street will never appear among the top stories of search engines or newscasts,” the **Holy Father** notes at the beginning of the prayer intention he shares with the **Universal Church** this month.

### Those forgotten by the press

It is specifically for them, those forgotten by the press, that this month’s video seeks to draw attention to. The images accompanying **Pope Francis’s** words show homeless people – alone or in small groups, at times almost stepped on by passersby – on the sidewalks of Canada, the United States, Kenya, Cameroon and India; street children who spend their day washing the windshields of cars stopped at stoplights in San Salvador; people with different disabilities in Spain, the Philippines and Central America; shantytowns near skyscrapers in Vancouver, and near buildings in Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro.

Various types of people live on the margins of our society. Their numbers are much higher than we think. In fact, according to the United Nations, more than 700 million (10% of the population) live in extreme poverty, facing major difficulties in obtaining basic necessities, such as healthcare, education, access to water and sanitation. The UN also adds that around 1.6 billion people live in inadequate living conditions, including in the most industrialized countries. Similarly, reports from the World Health Organization

reveal that one of every eight persons lives with a “mental disorder,” and that 16% of the world’s population lives with a “serious disability.”

### **“Culture of welcoming” rather than a “throwaway culture”**

“How is it that we allow the ‘throwaway culture,’ in which millions of men and women are worth nothing compared to economic goods, to dominate our lives, our cities, our way of life?” **Pope Francis** continues to ask. Sadly, he acknowledges, “our necks are going to get stiff from looking the other way so we don’t have to see this situation.” The **Pope** invites us to “stop making invisible those who are on the margins of society, whether it’s due to poverty, addictions, mental illness or disability.”

“Let’s focus on accepting them,” he urges, “on welcoming all the people who need it. The ‘culture of welcoming,’ of hospitality, of providing shelter, of giving a home, of offering love, of giving human warmth.” And so, he asks all believers to mobilize in prayer “for those people who live on the margins of society in subhuman living conditions, that they may not be neglected by institutions and never be cast out.”

### **Welcoming is more than helping**

“Prayer brings to light what is hidden in the heart. Therefore, those living on the margins, as if invisible, must find room in our hearts. They are in the heart of the Church: a heart of flesh and not of stone. A heart of stone casts out; a heart of flesh welcomes,” says **Cardinal Michael Czerny**, Prefect of the [Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development](#), about the Holy Father’s video for the month of September. He adds, “**Pope Francis** is aware of the educational power of prayer and through it, he invites us to develop a culture of welcome. ‘The stone rejected by the builders has become the corner stone.’ This message will be strong and credible if, even today, we give a voice to the outcasts, if we recognize the indelible dignity of those who have been crucified by a ruthless economy, by harassment or by indifference. Welcoming is more than helping: it means putting the other person at our level, rediscovering a sister or a brother we have lost. We are transformed into one Body through prayer.”

### **A “culture of welcoming”**

**Father Frédéric Fornos S.J.**, International Director of the [Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network](#), comments: “How is it possible to find a tangible solution to the millions of outcasts who often meet only with indifference, or even annoyance, in response? **Pope Francis** invites us to approach poverty and exclusion differently. This means praying, since prayer transforms our hearts, it changes our outlook and opens us up to others, in particular, to the most vulnerable. Let us pray with Pope Francis for a ‘culture of



welcoming,' so that everyone who needs it might find welcome, shelter, a home, love, and human warmth.”

*The Pope Video is possible thanks to the generous contributions of many people. You can donate by following [this link](#).*

Where can you watch the video?

- [Official website of The Pope Video](#)
- [YouTube channel of The Pope Video](#)
- [Facebook page of The Pope Video](#)
- [The Pope Video on Twitter](#)
- [The Pope Video on Instagram](#)
- [The Pope on Twitter @Pontifex](#)
- [The Pope on Instagram @Franciscus](#)

#### **About The Pope Video**

The Pope Video is an official global initiative with the purpose of disseminating the Holy Father's monthly prayer intentions. It is carried out by the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network (Apostleship of Prayer). **Since 2016, The Pope Video has had more than 205 million views across all the Vatican's social networks, and is translated into more than 23 languages, receiving press coverage in 114 countries.** The videos are produced and created by The Pope Video Prayer Network team, coordinated by Andrea Sarubbi, and distributed by La Machi Communication for Good Causes. The project is sponsored by [Vatican Media](#). More information: [The Pope Video](#).

#### **About the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network**

The Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network is a Vatican foundation, with the mission of mobilizing Catholics through prayer and action in response to the challenges facing humanity and the mission of the Church. These challenges are presented in the form of prayer intentions entrusted by the Pope to the entire Church. The foundation's mission is inscribed in the dynamic of the Heart of Jesus, a mission of compassion for the world. Founded in 1844 as the Apostleship of Prayer, it is present in 89 countries, and is made up of more than 22 million Catholics. It includes a youth branch, the Eucharistic Youth Movement (EYM). In December 2020, the Pope constituted this pontifical work as a Vatican Foundation and approved its new statutes. Its international director is Fr. Frédéric Fornos, SJ. For more information, visit: <https://www.popesprayer.va>.

#### **Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development**

The Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development was created on 17 August 2016. Since January 2017, the competencies of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum* and the Pontifical Council for Health Care Workers were united in the Dicastery. The Dicastery promotes the human development of the person in the light of the Gospel according to the social doctrine of the Church. It pays close attention to questions regarding social justice; deepens and develops themes regarding the common good, peace and the protection of creation, human rights, healthcare, migrants and human trafficking; and expresses the solicitude and concern of the Pope for those who suffer and are in need.

#### **PRESS CONTACT**

[press@thepopevideo.org](mailto:press@thepopevideo.org)

+34 633 32 33 29

+39 06 69 868 383