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# An Extraordinary "Urbi et Orbi" Blessing

This papal blessing dates back to the time of the Roman Empire. Over the years, it was eventually extended to the entire Catholic population.

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Pope Francis has decided to deliver **an extraordinary 'Urbi et Orbi' blessing this Friday, March 27**, in light of the ongoing pandemic keeping the world indoors and

Catholics away from physically receiving the sacraments.

German priest Johannes Grohe, a professor of Church History at the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross, explains: "The 'Urbi et Orbi' blessing is known as the papal blessing. The newly elected pontiff imparts it from the benediction loggia of St. Peter's Basilica. It is given to the city of Rome and the Catholic world spread throughout the globe. The same blessing is given on the day of the Nativity of the Lord and on Easter Sunday of the Resurrection."

The blessing dates back to the time of the Roman Empire. Over the years, it was eventually extended to the entire Catholic population. "The formula of the words, 'Urbs et Orbis', was seen for the first time in the title of the Lateran basilica: 'omnium Urbis et orbis ecclesiarum Mater et

Caput'. These words frame the first cathedral church, built in Rome during the time of Emperor Constantine, "says Professor Grohe.

On this particular occasion, the blessing is considered extraordinary because it occurs outside one of the traditional moments. "On March 27, as indicated by the Vatican Press Office, everyone who unites spiritually to this moment of prayer, through media platforms, will be granted a plenary indulgence, in accordance with the conditions indicated in the recent decree from the Apostolic Penitentiary."

To obtain the indulgence, it is important to have a sincere intention of going to confession and receiving the Eucharist as soon as possible.

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## **Formula of the "Urbi et Orbi" Blessing**

- Sancti Apostoli Petrus et Paulus, de quorum potestate et auctoritate confidimus, ipsi intercedam pro nobis ad Dominum.

- **Amen.**

- Precibus et meritis beatæ Mariæ semper Virginis, beati Michaelis Archangeli, beati Ioannis Baptistæ et sanctorum Apostolorum Petri et Pauli et omnium Sanctorum misereatur vestri omnipotens Deus et dimissis omnibus peccatis vestris, perducatur vos Iesus Christus ad vitam æter.

- **Amen.**

- Indulgentiam, absolutionem et remissionem omnium peccatorum vestrorum, spatium verae et fructuosae penitentiæ, cor semper penitens et emendationem vitæ,

gratiam et consultationem sancti Spiritus et finalem perseverantiam in bonis operibus, tribuat vobis omnipotens et misericors Dominus.

- **Amen.**

- Et benedictio Dei omnipotentis (Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti) descendat super vos et maneat semper.

- **Amen.**

*English translation*

May the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, in whose power and authority we trust, intercede for us before the Lord.

**℞: Amen.**

Through the prayers and merits of Blessed Mary ever Virgin, Saint Michael the Archangel, Saint John the Baptist, the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and all the saints, may

Almighty God have mercy on you and forgive all your sins, and may Jesus Christ bring you to everlasting life.

**℟: Amen.**

May the almighty and merciful Lord grant you indulgence, absolution and the remission of all your sins, a season of true and fruitful penance, a well-disposed heart, amendment of life, the grace and comfort of the Holy Spirit and final perseverance in good works.

**℟: Amen.**

And may the blessing of Almighty God, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you forever.

**℟: Amen.**

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