Vatican
Francis, the comic strip

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Celebrating Mass on Easter Monday, Pope Francis prayed that the political and economic planning for recovery after the coronavirus pandemic would be inspired by concern for the common good and not for "the god money."

"Today we pray for government officials, scientists (and) politicians who have begun to study the way out, the post-pandemic, this 'after' that already has begun, that they may find the right path always for the benefit of their people," the pope said at the beginning of his morning Mass April 13.

At the Mass in the chapel of his residence, the Domus Sanctae Marthae, Francis' homily focused on the contrast found in the day's reading from the Gospel of St. Matthew: the women disciples are "fearful yet overjoyed" to find Jesus' tomb empty, while the chief priests and elders pay the soldiers to spread the lie that the disciples stole the body from the tomb.

"Today's Gospel presents us with a choice, a choice to make every day, a human choice, but one that endures from that day: the choice between the joy and hope of

the resurrection of Jesus or the yearning for the tomb," the pope said.

The Gospel says the women run from the tomb to tell the other disciples that Jesus has risen, the pope noted. "God always starts with the women. Always. They open the way. They do not doubt; they know. They have seen him, touched him."

"It's true that the disciples couldn't believe them and said, 'But maybe these women are a bit too imaginative' — I don't know, they had their doubts," the pope said. But the women were certain, and their message continues to ring out today: "Jesus is risen; he lives among us."

But the chief priests and elders, the pope said, could think only, "How many problems will this cause us, this empty tomb. And they decide to hide the fact."

The story is always the same, he said. "When we do not serve the Lord God, we serve the other god, money."

"Today, too, looking at the coming — and we hope it's soon — the coming end of this pandemic, there is the same choice," Francis said. "Either our wager will be on life, on the resurrection of people, or it will be on the god money, returning to the tomb of hunger, slavery, wars, the manufacturing of weapons, children without education — the tomb is there."

The pope ended his homily praying that God would help people choose life in their personal decisions and in societal ones and that those responsible for planning the way out of the lockdowns would choose "the good of the people and never fall into the tomb of the god money."

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