Vatican
Vatican News
Pope Francis bows his head as Black women place his hands on his shoulders in a photo on th

Pope Francis, in a screen grab from a video, explains why he and all popes need people's prayers. The Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network is asking Catholics to pray for the pope in the month of November. (CNS photo/ThePopeVideo.org)

Cindy Wooden

View Author Profile

Catholic News Service

View Author Profile

Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

Vatican City — October 31, 2023
Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint

Pope Francis regularly asks people to pray for him, and in October he jokingly told a group of nuns why: "This job is not easy; in fact, it's a bit bothersome."

But since the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network, formerly known as the Apostleship of Prayer, has asked Catholics across the globe to pray for the pope during the month of November, he gave a more serious response in the network's monthly pope video.

"Your prayer gives me strength and helps me to discern and to accompany the church, listening to the Holy Spirit," he said in Spanish in the video released Oct. 31.

"The fact that someone is pope doesn't mean they lose their humanity," he said. "On the contrary, my humanity grows each day with God's holy and faithful people."

Advertisement

Francis also explained that while being elected by cardinals in a conclave makes a cardinal the pope, actually being the pope "is also a process."

"The person becomes aware of what it means to be a pastor," he said. "And in this process, he learns how to be more charitable, more merciful and, above all, more patient, like God our Father, who is so patient."

"I can imagine that at the beginning of their pontificate, all the popes had this feeling of trepidation, apprehension, knowing that he will be judged harshly," the pope said, because God will ask every bishop for a serious accounting of his ministry.

Francis asked people to judge him "benevolently," and to "pray that the pope, whoever he might be -- today it is my turn -- may receive the help of the Holy Spirit, that he may be docile to that help."