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Pope Francis waves to visitors from a car as he arrives in St. Peter’s Square to preside over M

Pope Francis waves to visitors from a car as he arrives in St. Peter’s Square to preside over Mass for the Jubilee of the Armed Services, Police and Security Personnel at the Vatican Feb. 9, 2025. (CNS photo/Lola Gomez)



by Christopher White

Former Vatican Correspondent (2021-2025)

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Pope Francis is continuing his treatment for a respiratory infection at Rome's Gemelli Hospital but his condition is improving, according to a Feb. 15 update from the Vatican press office.

The 88-year-old pontiff was hospitalized on Feb. 14 after a bout with bronchitis that had left him short of breath and unable to deliver long public speeches in recent weeks.

According to a statement from the Vatican press office, released at around 6 p.m. on Saturday evening in Rome, the pope is no longer experiencing a fever and his treatment "was slightly modified based on further microbiological findings."

"During the morning he received the Holy Eucharist, then alternated rest with prayer and reading," said the statement.

The Vatican also announced that the pope will not lead the recitation of the Sunday Angelus Prayer on Feb. 16, as his doctors have ordered complete rest.

This current hospitalization is Francis' fourth extended stay in Gemelli over the course of his papacy. Two of those have been for intestinal surgeries and two for bronchitis. The octogenarian pontiff, who had a portion of his lung removed when he was a young man, has frequently struggled with respiratory illnesses during the winter months.

Around the Vatican, the pope's hospitalization is viewed with great relief, as many of his closest advisors had urged Francis to seek medical treatment in the days leading up to his hospitalization.

For days, the pontiff resisted, presiding over an outdoor Sunday Mass on Feb 9 and keeping a full calendar of public appearances, including holding four meetings in the hours before he was admitted to the hospital on Feb. 14.

"Pope Francis has been updated on the many messages of closeness and affection received and expresses his gratitude, asking at the same time to continue to pray for him," read the Vatican statement.

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This story appears in the **Pope Francis' health crisis** feature series. View the full series.