Vatican
Vatican News



People hold a banner with a greeting in Italian for Pope Francis outside Rome's Gemelli Hospital on March 6. The banner says, "Cercola is praying for you. Stay strong, rise and walk." The phrase "rise and walk" is from the Acts of the Apostles, and Cercola is a town near Naples. (CNS/Lola Gomez)



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Rome — March 6, 2025
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Pope Francis on March 6 released a brief audio message expressing gratitude for the outpouring of prayers he has received during his three-week hospitalization for double pneumonia.

"I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your prayers for my health from the Square, I accompany you from here," said Francis. "May God bless you and the Virgin protect you. Thank you."

The 30-second recording was played at the start of the nightly rosary service taking place in St. Peter's Square for the health and recovery of the ailing pontiff. It marks the first time any audio has been released from the pontiff since his hospitalization began.

Pope Francis on March 6 released a brief audio message expressing gratitude for the outpouring of prayers he has received during his three-week hospitalization for double pneumonia. The message can be heard in this video. (NCR video/Angie Von Slaughter; Audio courtesy of Vatican)

The 88-year-old pontiff spoke in his native Spanish, delivering the 29-word message with a gravelly, pained voice that is evidently still weakened from his prolonged

illness.

The message was recorded earlier today and the shortness of breath that plagued the pontiff prior to his hospitalization could still be heard in the recorded message, despite the brevity of the message.

The nightly vigils in St. Peter's Square, led by the Rome-based cardinals, began ten days ago and at times have drawn several thousand attendees. Spanish Cardinal Ángel Fernández Artime, pro-prefect of the Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, presided over the March 6 service.



Drawings for Pope Francis are placed at the base of a statue of St. John Paul II outside Rome’s Gemelli Hospital March 6, where the pope has been hospitalized since Feb. 14, receiving treatment for double pneumonia. (CNS/Lola Gomez)

Tonight's release of the audio message comes after the pope's doctors said earlier this evening that Francis has remained in stable condition for another day and is another sign that he is continuing on a positive trajectory.

A Vatican statement released at 7:45 p.m. local time on March 6 said the pontiff has not had any new episodes of respiratory failure since March 3. The report noted that the pope's blood pressure and other bloodwork also remained normal and that the octogenarian pontiff remains without a fever.

Today (March 6) marks three weeks since the 88-year-old pontiff first entered hospital on Feb. 14 following several weeks of experiencing respiratory difficulties that developed into double pneumonia.

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Given the relatively positive outlook, the Vatican noted that it would wait 48 hours until the next medical update on Francis' health is provided, unless there are any notable developments.

A Vatican source confirmed that during the day on Thursday, Francis received high-flow oxygen through nasal tubes. Throughout the past week, the pope has been rotating between receiving oxygen through a mechanical ventilation mask at night and through nasal cannulas during the day.

The pope also continues to receive physical therapy to improve his mobility, and he is able to eat solid food.

During the afternoon on Thursday, the pope engaged in light work activities.

This breaking news story has been updated with reporting on the pope's audio message.

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