Vatican
Vatican News
3 nuns pray with large crowd

Religious sisters join hundreds of people in praying the rosary for Pope Francis' health in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on March 6 He has spent 23 days in Rome's Gemelli Hospital. (CNS/Pablo Esparza)



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Rome — March 8, 2025
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Pope Francis is responding well to therapy for double pneumonia and his doctors note a "gradual, slight improvement," the Vatican said on March 8.

A statement released at 7 p.m. local time this evening said that "the clinical conditions of the Holy Father in recent days have remained stable and, consequently, demonstrate a good response to therapy."

The medical bulletin said that Francis continues to have no fever and that his blood tests and blood counts remain stable.

"In order to continue recording these initial improvements in the coming days, the doctors are prudently keeping the prognosis reserved," the report said.

The March 8 statement is the first official medical update on the pope's health in 48 hours. After initially providing nightly medical bulletins, the Vatican announced on March 6 that since Francis' condition is stable, it would wait two days before providing further information.

The latest bulletin noted that Francis spent time during the day working, as well as in private prayer in the chapel of his hospital suite.

Despite Francis' improved condition, he will not recite March 9's Sunday Angelus prayer. This will mark his fourth week he has been unable to lead the weekly event, though the Vatican will publish his prepared remarks.

Children's drawings for pope

Drawings for Pope Francis cover the base of a statue of St. John Paul II outside Rome's Gemelli hospital March 8. (CNS/Pablo Esparza)

Prayers continue to pour in for the pope from all over the world; Francis has now spent 23 days in Rome's Gemelli Hospital.

On Friday, March 7, the Irish Embassy to the Holy See and the British Embassy to the Holy See co-sponsored an ecumenical prayer service for the pope. The liturgy was presided over by Archbishop Paul Gallagher, who serves as the Vatican's foreign minister, and attended by a number of Rome-based diplomats.

In the United States, the Archdiocese of Los Angeles released a 5-minute video featuring priests, teachers, families and school children expressing their well wishes and prayers for Francis. During the recent California wildfires, Francis repeatedly called on Catholics to remember the state during their prayers and offered his own on their behalf. Now, the archdiocese says it is reciprocating and offering support for the ailing pope.

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As has become custom over the past two weeks, a rosary prayer service will take tonight in St. Peter's Square for the pope's health and recovery. Jesuit Cardinal Michael Czerny, prefect of the Dicastery for Integral Human Development, will lead the service.

On Sunday, March 9, Czerny will also preside at a special Mass at St. Peter's Basilica for the Jubilee for the World of Volunteering, serving as the papal delegate for the Holy Year event in Francis' absence.

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