Vatican

Vatican News



Pope Francis greets the faithful in St. Peter's Square at the end of the closing Mass for the Jubilee of the Sick and Health Care Workers at the Vatican April 6, 2025. (CNS/Pablo Esparza)

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As Pope Francis continues his recovery at the Vatican, he is very slowly beginning to get back to his old routine of meeting with top Vatican officials, the Vatican press office said.

In addition to working with his secretaries, he met with Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, April 7, the press office said in a briefing with reporters April 8.

The pope is also in contact with other dicasteries by phone and goes over the texts and documents he receives from them, it added. His regular phone calls to Holy Family parish in Gaza, which were sporadic during his hospitalization, continue.

Francis was released from Rome's Gemelli hospital March 23 after more than five weeks of treatment for breathing difficulties, double pneumonia and a polymicrobial infection in his airways.

His doctors had said he would need two months to convalesce following his release, which included staying home, avoiding visitors and keeping up with pharmacological, respiratory and physical therapy.

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However, the pope surprised the faithful when he appeared in St. Peter's Square April 6 at the end of the closing Mass of the Jubilee of the Sick and Health Care Workers. It was the first time Francis had been seen in public since he was discharged from the hospital.

Seated in a wheelchair and wearing a nasal cannula, the pope greeted the crowd with a strained voice, wishing them "A happy Sunday to you all, many thanks!" Before appearing in the square, he also went to confession in St. Peter's Basilica and passed through the Holy Door, the Vatican press office had said.

A Vatican source said the pope's appearance Sunday still fit within his doctors' recommendations, as the moment was very brief, it was outdoors and he greeted just a few people. A period of convalescence means being more careful about certain things and that was being respected, the source said.

The apparent difficulty the pope has in raising his arms, such as when he blessed or greeted the crowds in his last two public appearances, is connected with his long hospitalization and subsequent reduced mobility, the source added. The pope is following physical therapy that is meant to increase and improve all aspects of his mobility.

After concelebrating Mass with his secretaries each day, the pope spends "a good part" of his morning doing his physical therapy and respiratory therapy, which have led to some improvements as his condition and tests remain stable, the press office said. The rest of the day is dedicated to prayer and working.

Francis still has a lingering lung infection, which doctors had said would take time to clear up. He continues to use high-flow oxygen at night only when needed, the press office said.