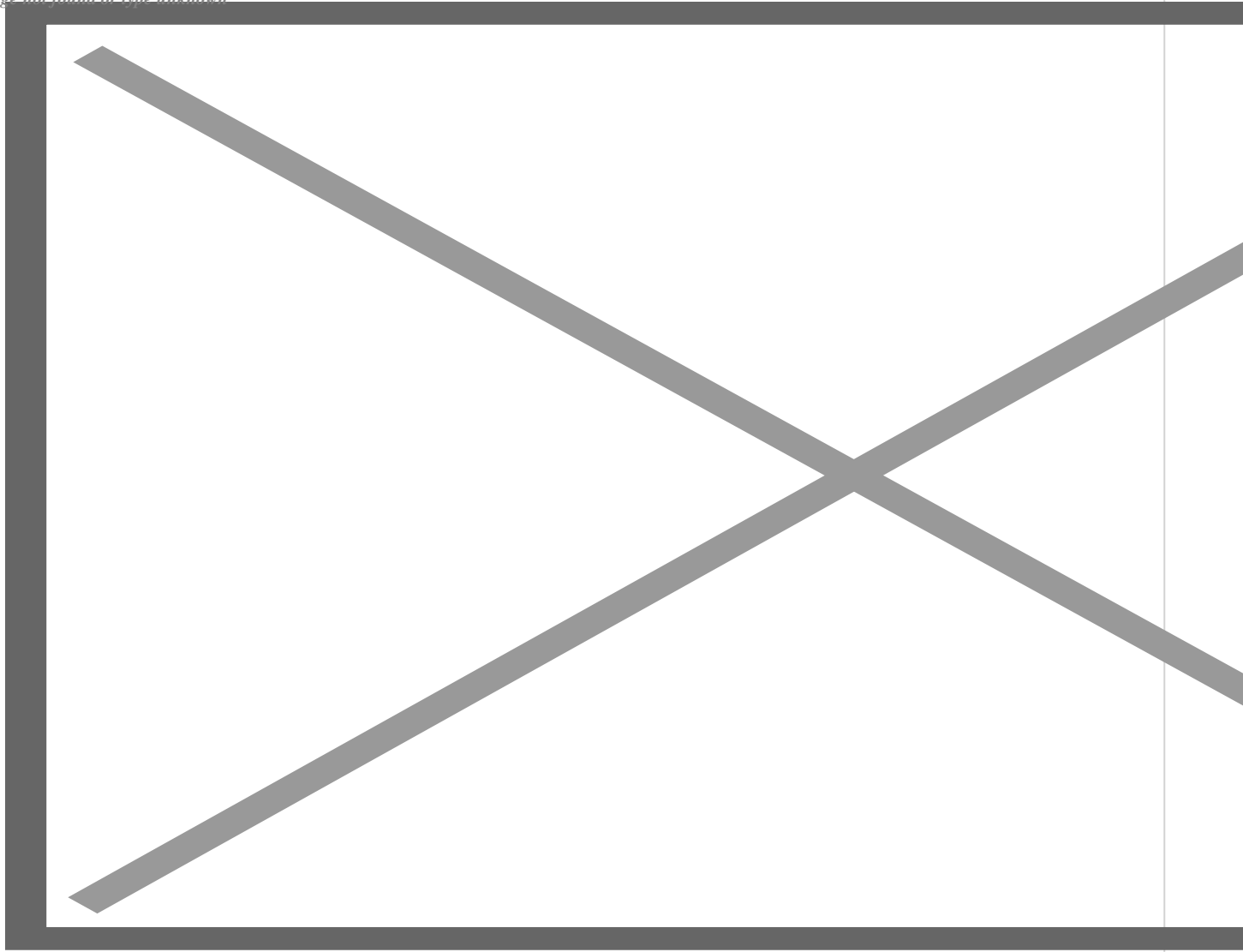


Pope Francis presides over Palm Sunday Mass at The Vatican

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Pope Francis presided over the Palm Sunday mass the Vatican, one day after leaving the Gemelli hospital in Rome

Havana, April 2 (RHC) Pope Francis presided over the Palm Sunday Mass in Saint Peter's Square in the Vatican, one day after leaving the Gemelli hospital in Rome, where he had been hospitalized since Wednesday due to bronchitis.

In the liturgical ceremony that opens the celebrations of Holy Week, the Supreme Pontiff gave a homily, in which he spoke about "closeness, compassion and tenderness" towards those most in need.

"I also need Jesus to caress me, to come close to me, and that is why I go to look for him in the abandoned, in the lonely," Francisco said before a crowd of more than 30,000 people who came to accompany him and to demonstrate with their presence the joy for his speedy recovery.

The Bishop of Rome referred to the fact that "there are entire towns exploited and abandoned to their fate; there are poor people who live at the crossroads of our streets and whose eyes we do not have the courage to meet; there are migrants who are no longer faces but numbers; there are rejected inmates, people classified as problems".

He spoke about the "invisible, hidden abandoned Christs, who are discarded with white gloves", such as "the unborn children, the elderly left alone, who can be your father, your mother, your grandfather and your grandmother abandoned in geriatrics", because "The sick are not visited, the disabled are ignored".

He also referred to "young people who feel a great inner emptiness without anyone really listening to their cry of pain and who find no other way than suicide."

"No one can be marginalized, no one can be left to themselves," the Pope emphasized.

After the Holy Father's homily, the mass in Saint Peter's Square continued with Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, as planned during the second part of it, in the so-called Eucharistic liturgy. Later, during the Angelus prayer, Pope Francis greeted those present "especially those who have come from afar."
(Source: Prensa Latina)

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