
Pope Francis: public audiences resuming today, he walks past the faithful, greeting them

For the first time, today's Wednesday Audience has taken place in the San Damaso Courtyard of the Vatican's Apostolic Palace. The resumption of public audiences, suspended as part of the restrictive measures taken to curb the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, comes six months after the last general audience with the faithful in St. Peter's Square on 26 February. The Pope arrived at about 9.20 on his blue Ford Focus, got off and stopped to converse with the faithful who were standing behind the barriers, wearing their face masks and respecting social distancing. Pope Francis chatted with some women and greeted all those present with a wave of his hand. He was all smiles and relaxed, grateful for being able to finally resume these encounters with "his" people, or at least some of them, who greeted him in turn with an applause. Then the Holy Father continued to walk along the courtyard area reserved for the faithful, frequently stopping to chat with the faithful before reaching his red velvet podium, right at the centre. The traditional zucchetto exchange also took place. Pope Francis also stopped to talk to an elderly woman introduced by a nun, as those present cheered him shouting "Viva il Papa" (long live the Pope).

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