

Pope Francis makes first appearance at Vatican after pneumonia recovery



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VATICAN CITY, April 6 – Pope Francis made a surprise public appearance on Sunday, marking his first since being discharged from the hospital two weeks ago. The 88-year-old Pope, who had been receiving treatment for double pneumonia, greeted cheering crowds at St. Peter’s Square in a wheelchair.

His appearance came after nearly two weeks of rest following a five-week hospital stay for

pneumonia. The Pope had been briefly seen on March 23 when he addressed the public before leaving Rome's Gemelli Hospital.

Waving to the crowd, Pope Francis spoke in a weak but improving voice, saying, "Happy Sunday to everyone. Thank you so much." He was receiving oxygen through a hose as he greeted the faithful, smiling as he made his way through the square.

Sunday's Mass was part of a special event honoring healthcare workers and the sick. In a message released by the Vatican, Pope Francis expressed his gratitude for God's closeness during his recovery. He also prayed that those suffering and healthcare workers may feel God's love and encouragement.

Pope Francis has been prescribed two months of rest at his Vatican residence to fully recuperate.

His calendar has been cleared, and it is uncertain whether he will lead Easter services on April 20.

Public appearances are expected to be limited during this period.

The Pope's recovery has been a significant concern, as his medical team had even considered ending his treatment during his stay in the hospital due to his fragile condition.