



The News

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by Emma Phillips

The bells of Notre Dame cathedral rang out 88 times earlier today to mark the death of Pope Francis. The Vatican has confirmed that the Pope died at 7.35 this morning at the age of 88. Just yesterday, the Pope had addressed crowds in Rome at an Easter service and greeted supporters from the open-top Pope-mobile. A little later this evening, crowds will be gathering in the city's Saint Peter's Square for the first public prayer after his death. The Pope's body will also be laid in a coffin in a chapel in his Saint Martha residence this evening before his official funeral in the coming days.

In his twelve years as Pope, the former archbishop of Buenos Aires made efforts to promote peace and interreligious dialogue, branding the war in Ukraine "absurd and cruel". In his final public appearance yesterday, he called for ceasefire in Gaza and for the release of the remaining captives held by Hamas. Emmanuel Macron has paid tribute to a figure who was "on the side of the most vulnerable and fragile". In Paris, the Eiffel Tower will remain in darkness tonight.

In Ukraine, Russian drone attacks have been reported by the country's military just hours after an unexpected "Easter truce" came to an end. On Saturday, Russian president Vladimir Putin unexpectedly announced the 30-hour truce. Both countries have accused the other of violating the temporary ceasefire.

And finally, on Mayotte, vaccination against chikungunya "will begin in the next few days". The announcement came from Emmanuel Macron, who is visiting the island. The president has confirmed that the "first doses" of the vaccine have arrived and will be issued to adults with co-morbidities.