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Jubilee of Mercy: pilgrimage of street people

Vatican City, 2 May 2016 – From 11 to 13 November 2016, several thousand people with experience of life on the street will converge on Rome from all over Europe to celebrate the Jubilee of Mercy one week before the closure of the Holy Year, according to a press release issued by the FRATELLO association, which is organising the event.

This time of pilgrimage and the opportunity to meet Pope Francis will give people from the most vulnerable sectors of society, who are often treated as outcasts, a chance to discover that their place is in the heart of God and in the heart of the Church. The Fratello event is being held in the same spirit as the prophetic appeal made by the Pope in Lampedusa and the Diaconia year organised by the Church in France.

In addition to taking part in the Jubilee activities, prayer meetings and visits discovering Rome, participants will be received in the Vatican by Pope Francis, who will lead a catechesis session on 11 November. They will attend a Mass presided by the Pope specially for them on 13 November. Between these two major events, the pilgrimage will also include opportunities to meet major witnesses and important moments of sharing, especially a prayer vigil with Cardinal Philippe Barbarin, archbishop of Lyon, France. In October 2014, 150 street people from France took part with their escorts in a pilgrimage, which ended with a brief meeting with Pope Francis. And that is how FRATELLO, the organiser of this year's event, was born.

Associations from all around Europe that work with deprived and homeless people are invited to join this pilgrimage.