



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE **BOLLETTINO**

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIÈGE PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLS
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Works of mercy for the suffering Church

Vatican City, 17 June 2016 – This morning Pope Francis received in audience a delegation from the Pontifical Foundation "Aid to the Church in Need" (ACN), on the occasion of the opening of the international fundraising campaign – from 17 June to 4 October 2016 – for the realisation of a number of works of mercy throughout the world. Prison pastoral care, rehabilitation centres, support groups for women who have suffered violence and aid to refugees are just some of the types of initiatives that are supported. The campaign will be supported by each one of the Foundation's twenty-two offices worldwide and will end on 4 October, feast of St. Francis of Assisi, when the foundation will present to the Pope the first fruits of the initiative.

The first benefactor of the campaign is Pope Francis, who on the occasion of a recent trip made by an Italian ACN delegation to Erbil, in Iraqi Kurdistan, made a contribution to the Foundation to assist Iraqi Christians, via Bishop Francesco Cavina of Carpi.

The Pope's donation will be devolved to the St. John Charity clinic in Erbil, which offers free medical care to around 2,800 refugees without any discrimination on the basis of religion.

This morning, during the conference for the presentation of the campaign on the theme "Be God's mercy" at Vatican Radio the Holy Father send a video message to the organisers, the full text of which is given below.

"I want to appeal to all men and women of good will all around the world for a work of mercy to be done in each town, in each diocese, in each association. We, men and women, need God's mercy, but we also need each other's mercy. We need to take each other's hand, caress each other, take care of each other and not make so many wars.

I am looking here at the dossier prepared by Kirche in Not, a papal foundation, to carry out works of mercy in the whole world. I trust Kirche in Not with this work... I also entrust them to carry on the spirit they have inherited from Father Werenfried van Straaten who had the vision at the right time to carry out in the world these gestures of closeness, of proximity, of goodness, of love and of mercy.

So I invite all of you, together with Kirche in Not, to do, everywhere in the world, a work of mercy but one that

stays, a permanent work of mercy; a structure for so many needs that there are today in the world.

I thank you for everything you do. And do not be afraid of mercy: mercy is God's caress."
