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# BOLLETTINO

SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

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## Official visit of the Holy Father to the President of the Italian Republic, His Excellency Mr. Sergio Mattarella

At 10.45 this morning, the Holy Father Francis left the Vatican by car, followed by a procession of other representations, destined for the Quirinal Palace for an official visit to the President of the Italian Republic, His Excellency Mr. Sergio Mattarella.

The papal entourage was composed of: Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Parolin; His Excellency Msgr. Angelo Becciu, substitute for General Affairs of the Secretariat of State; Cardinal Agostino Vallini, vicar general of His Holiness for the Diocese of Rome; Cardinal Gualtiero Bassetti, archbishop of Perugia and president of the Italian Episcopal Conference; Cardinal Giuseppe Bertello, president of the Governorate of Vatican City State; His Excellency Msgr. Georg Gänswein, prefect of the Papal Household; Msgr. Leonardo Sapienza, regent of the Papal Household; His Excellency Msgr. Adriano Bernardini, apostolic nuncio in Italy and Msgr. Stefano Mazzotti, nunciature counsellor.

Upon arrival at the Quirinal Palace, the Holy Father was greeted by the President of the Republic in the Courtyard of Honour. After military honours and the national anthems, the Holy Father and the President of the Republic proceeded to the President's study, where a private meeting took place.

At the end of the private meeting, in the Hall of Tapestries, the exchange of gifts took place, along with the presentation of the two official delegations, followed by a brief pause in the Chapel of the Annunziata.

The Holy Father and the President of the Republic then entered the Salone dei Corazzieri, where they gave their discourses.

Finally, Pope Francis and President Mattarella proceeded to the Gardens of the Quirinal Palace, where they greeted around two hundred children invited from the areas of Central Italy.

At around 12.30 the Holy Father left the Quirinal Palace and returned to the Vatican.

*The following are the Pope's address to the President and his off-the-cuff greeting to the children gathered in the*

*Gardens of the Quirinal Palace:*

### Holy Father's Address

Mr President,

Thank you for the cordial welcome you have addressed to me on behalf of the entire Italian people. This visit of mine forms part of the framework of relations between the Holy See and Italy, and repays the visit you made to the Vatican on 8 April 2015, shortly after your election to the highest State office.

I look at Italy with *hope*. A hope that is *rooted in grateful remembrance* of parents and grandparents, who are also mine, since my roots are in this country. Grateful remembrance of the generations who have preceded us and who, with God's help, have handed down fundamental values: the dignity of the person, the family, work... And they placed these values also at the centre of the republican Constitution, which offered and offers a stable framework of reference for the democratic life of the people. A hope, therefore, based on memory, on grateful remembrance.

However, we live in a time in which Italy and Europe as a whole are called upon to face problems and risks of various types, such as international terrorism, which is fed by fundamentalism; the migratory phenomenon, aggravated by wars and the grave and persistent social and economic imbalances in many areas of the world; and the difficulties of the young generations in gaining access to stable and dignified employment, which contributes to increasing distrust in the future and does not favour the birth of new families and children.

I rejoice, however, to discover that Italy, through the active generosity of her citizens and the effort of her institutions, and appealing to her abundant spiritual resources, is working to transform these challenges into occasions for growth and new opportunities.

Evidence of this is found in, among other things, the welcome given to many refugees who land on her shores, the rescue work guaranteed by her ships in the Mediterranean and the efforts made by teams of volunteers, including ecclesial associations and bodies and the grassroots network of parishes. It is shown also by Italy's abundant commitments in the international sphere in the promotion of peace, the maintenance of security, and cooperation between States.

I would also like to recall the fortitude inspired by faith with which the populations of earthquake-stricken central Italy have lived this dramatic experience, with many examples of fruitful collaboration between the ecclesial and civil communities.

The way in which the State and the Italian people are facing the migratory crisis, along with the efforts made to assist dutifully the populations afflicted by the earthquake, are expressions of the sentiments and attitudes which find their most genuine source in the Christian faith, which has shaped the character of Italians, and shines the most in dramatic moments.

With regard to the vast and complex migratory phenomenon, it is clear that the full burden cannot be faced by a few nations, ensuring an orderly integration of new arrivals in their own social fabric. For this reason, it is essential and urgent that extensive and incisive international cooperation be developed.

Among the issues that most concern those who care about the common good, and in particular the public authorities, employers and workers' unions, is that of *labour*. I have had the opportunity to touch upon this not just theoretically, but in direct contact with the people, workers and unemployed, in my visits in Italy, including the very recent one to Genoa. I reiterate my call to generate and accompany processes that give rise to new and decent work opportunities. Juvenile hardship, pockets of poverty, the difficulties that the young encounter in

forming a family and in raising children find a common denominator in the insufficiency of available work, often so precarious or poorly paid that it does not enable serious planning.

It is necessary for there to be an alliance of synergies and initiatives so that financial resources be placed at the service of this aim, with its broad reach and social value, and so that there are not instead distorted and dispersed in investments of a prevalently speculative nature, which indicate the lack of long-term planning, insufficient consideration of the true role of business and, ultimately, weakness and the instinct to flee from the challenges of our time.

Stable *employment*, along with a policy actively committed to favouring the family, the first and primary place in which the person-in-relations is formed, are the condition for authentic sustainable development and harmonious growth of society. They are two pillars that give support to the common home and which strengthen it to face the future with a spirit that is not resigned or fearful, but creative and confident. The new generations have the right to be able to work towards important goals and the fullness of their destiny, so that, driven by noble ideals, they may find the strength and courage to make in turn the necessary sacrifices to reach the target, to build a future worthy of man, in relationships, in work, in the family and in society.

To this end, all those with responsibilities in the political and administrative field are required to carry out patient and humble work for the common good, seeking to strengthen the bonds between people and institutions, so that this tenacious weave and choral effort may develop true democracy and begin to find a solution to issues that, owing to their complexity, no-one may claim to be able to resolve alone.

The *Church in Italy* is a vital reality, strongly bonded to the soul of the country and to the feelings of the people. She lives its joys and sorrows, and seeks, in accordance with her possibilities, to alleviate sufferings, strengthen the social bond, and help all to build the common good. In this too the Church is inspired by the teaching of the pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes* of Vatican Council II, which urges collaboration between the ecclesial community and the political community inasmuch as they are both at the service of the same human beings. This teaching is consecrated, in the revision of the Concordat of 1984, in the first article of the Agreement, which formulates the commitment of State and Church “to mutual collaboration for the promotion of man and the good of the country”.

This commitment, which recalls the principle of the distinction set out in Article 7 of the Constitution, expresses and has promoted at the same time a peculiar form of *secularity*, not hostile or conflictual, but friendly and collaborative, even in the rigorous distinction of the competences of the political institutions on the one hand, and religious ones on the other. A secularity that my predecessor Benedict XVI defined as “positive”. And one cannot fail to observe that, thanks to this, the state of relations in the collaboration between Church and State in Italy is excellent, to the advantage of individuals and of the entire national community.

Italy has also the single task and honour of having the seat of the universal governance of the Catholic Church. It is evident that, despite the guarantees offered with the Treaty of 1929, the mission of Peter’s Successor would not have been made possible without the generous willingness and collaboration of the Italian State. A further demonstration of this was given during the recent extraordinary Jubilee, which saw many faithful come to Rome, to the tombs of the Apostles Peter and Paul, in a spirit of reconciliation and mercy. Despite the insecurity of the times in which we are living, the Jubilee celebrations took place in a tranquil manner, and to great spiritual advantage. The Holy See is fully cognizant of, and truly grateful for the great commitment ensured by Italy.

Mr. President,

I am certain that if Italy is to use all her spiritual and material resources in a spirit of collaboration among her various civil members, she will find the right way towards orderly development and to governing in the most appropriate way the phenomena and problems she faces.

The Holy See, the Catholic Church and her institutions assure, with respect to the distinction of roles and responsibilities, their active collaboration with a view to the common good. In the Catholic Church and in the

principles of Christianity, by which her rich and centuries-long history is formed, Italy will always find her best ally for the growth of society, for her harmony, and for her true progress.

God bless and protect Italy!

#### **The Pope's off-the-cuff greeting to children in the Gardens of the Quirinal Palace**

Dear boys and girls, thank you so much for being here. Many thanks for your singing, and also for your courage. Go ahead with courage, always onwards, always upwards! It is an art, always to rise up. It is true that in life there are difficulties – you have suffered greatly with this earthquake – there are falls, but that beautiful song that the Alpinists sing comes to mind: in the art of climbing, success resides not in not falling, but in not staying down. Always upwards, always with that phrase, “rise up”, and onwards! May the Lord bless you.

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