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Audience with the organizers of the Christmas Concert with the Poor and for the Poor

This morning, in the Vatican Apostolic Palace, the Holy Father Francis received in audience the organizers of the Christmas Concert with the Poor and for the Poor.

The following is the Pope's greeting to those present at the audience:

Greeting of the Holy Father

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning!

I am pleased to meet you who, in various ways, have collaborated in the realization of the *Concert with the Poor*, which will take place in the Paul VI Hall this afternoon. I am pleased because I want to thank you. Each one of you has given his or her contribution; and Msgr. Frisina once again knew how to orchestrate the whole. It is easier to create harmony with notes than with people... but this is not your case! You are capable of making harmony among yourselves, thank you!

I thank you because, involving many people, you succeed in offering a free concert to thousands of destitute people, and with music you offer a moment of encounter, of sharing, and then a meal and blankets: in a word, fraternity. This is very consistent with the message of Christmas.

Yours is a concert *with* the poor. This is decisive, this *with* is the key. Passing from *for* to *with*. Passing from *for* the poor to *with* the poor. It starts from *for* but should arrive at *with*. And this is Christian. God came for us, but how? In what way? Coming to live *with us*, rather, becoming *like us*. This mystery always leaves us speechless. It is too great, it exceeds us. And yet we can experience it in the encounter with the other who is different from me: when my giving something for him or for her becomes receiving, becomes sharing, becomes friendship. From *for* to *with*.

Dear friends, I thank you and I ask you to pray for this to happen: music is not enough, the music and lights are not enough, no, it takes prayer. Let us entrust it to the intercession of Mary, our Mother. I pray for you. And I bless you all and your loved ones, and I wish you a happy Christmas! And I ask you, please, to pray for me. And if any of you do not pray, at least send me good vibes, because I need them!
