



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE
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Francis greets faithful from the Netherlands on their Jubilee pilgrimage

This morning, at the altar of the Cathedra of St. Peter's Basilica, Mass was celebrated for pilgrims from the Netherlands, in Rome on the occasion of the Jubilee of Mercy. At the end of the Eucharistic celebration, the Holy Father greeted the pilgrims in the basilica.

"I am very glad to greet you here in St. Peter's Basilica, on the occasion of the "Dutch Day" of the Jubilee of Mercy", he said. "It is beautiful that you have come together, pastors and faithful of all the dioceses of the Netherlands, in a joint pilgrimage to Rome. In this way you demonstrate the life and the communion of the Church in the Netherlands and unity with the Successor of Peter".

"The Holy Year enables us to enter into a closer relationship with Jesus Christ, the face of the mercy of the Father. We never exhaust this great mystery of God's love! It is the source of our salvation: all of us, all the world, are in need of divine mercy. It saves us, it gives us life, it recreates us as true sons and daughters of God. And we experience the salvific goodness of God in a special way in the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. Confession is the place in which one receives the gift of forgiveness and God's mercy. Here begins the transformation of each one of us and the reform of the life of the Church".

"I encourage you therefore to open your hearts and let yourself be formed by God's mercy. In this way you will in turn become instruments of mercy", the Pope urged the pilgrims. "Embraced by the merciful Father Who always offers us His forgiveness, you will be able to bear witness to His love in your everyday life. The men and women of today thirst for God; they thirst for His goodness and His love. And you too, as 'channels' of mercy, can help slake this thirst; you can help many people to rediscover Christ, Saviour and Redeemer of humanity. As missionary disciples of Jesus, you can 'irrigate' society with the proclamation of the Gospel and with charity, especially towards those most in need and abandoned to their own devices".

At the end of his brief address, the Holy Father entrusted the pilgrims and all the Church in the Netherlands to the maternal protection of Mary Most Holy, Mother of Mercy, imparting his heartfelt blessing and asking them to pray for him.

