

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE  
OFICINA DE PRENSA DE LA SANTA SEDE



BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIEGE  
PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLIS

# **BOLLETTINO**

SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

N. 161226b

Monday 26.12.2016

## **The Pope's message for victims of the Black Sea air crash**

After praying the Angelus, the Holy Father remembered the 92 victims of the aviation accident in the Black Sea, in which a Russian military aircraft crashed shortly after takeoff from Sochi airport, destined for Syria. "I express my deepest sympathy", he said, "following the sad news of the Russian aircraft that crashed into the Black Sea. May the Lord console the dear Russian people and the relatives of the passengers on board: journalists, crew, and the excellent choir and orchestra of the Armed Forces. May the Blessed Virgin Mary support the rescue operations currently underway. In the year 2004 the Choir sang in the Vatican for the 26th anniversary of the papacy of St. John Paul II. Let us pray for them".

Before leaving, he congratulated all those named Stephen or Stephanie, celebrating their name day today, and added that in these days he had received many congratulatory messages from all over the world. "As I cannot answer each one of them, today I give thanks to all, especially for the gift of prayer. I thank you from my heart, and may God reward you with His generosity".