



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE **BOLLETTINO**

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIÈGE PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLS
OFICINA DE PRENSA DE LA SANTA SEDE SALA DE IMPRENSA DA SANTA SÉ
دار الصحافة التابعة للكرسى الرسولي BIURO PRASOWE STOLICY APOSTOLSKIEJ

N. 170125b

Wednesday 25.01.2017

Greetings to faithful and pilgrims: prayers for Christian Unity

After today's general audience, the Pope greeted the faithful from different countries present in the Paul VI Hall, including French-speaking pilgrims, especially those from the diocese of Arras. "On this day, on which we recall the conversion of the apostle Paul, who invites us to let ourselves be guided by the Holy Spirit, He will help us to grow in trust in God's Providence, and to become witnesses of hope", said the Holy Father.

He also welcomed English-speaking faithful, especially the groups from the United States and, in the context of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, he addressed a special greeting to the students of the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey and the Westminster Abbey Choir, "whom I thank for their praise of God through song".

To German speakers, he recalled that Judith, a woman full of faith and bravery, is proclaimed "blessed by God Most High, beyond all women on earth". "She recalls the Blessed Virgin Mary, mother of Christ and mother of hope. Let us learn from Mary how to walk the paths of hope and to entrust ourselves to the Lord Who leads us from the dark to His Paschal light.

I address a cordial welcome to Spanish-speaking pilgrims, in particular the groups from Spain and Latin America", he continued. "Today we celebrate the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, and conclude the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. I invite all of you who, aware that we are driven by the love of Christ, never to stop praying for Christians to work with fraternal respect and active charity, to achieve the so greatly desired unity".

Finally, he addressed Italian speakers, beginning with the religious families present, including the provincial superiors of the Friars Minor, the State Police Association of Caserta, and the Santo Stefano di Rieti confraternity, encouraging all to "be faithful to Christ, so that the joy of the Gospel may shine in society".

"A special thought goes to the young, the sick and newly-weds", he concluded. "Today we celebrate the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul. Dear young people, may the figure of St. Paul be for you a model of missionary discipleship. Dear sick people, offer your sufferings for the cause of unity in Christ's Church. And you, dear newly-weds, be inspired by the example of the Apostle of the People, acknowledging the primacy of God and His love in your family life".

