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Holy See Press Office Communiqué: visit of the Holy Father to the Sant'Alessio – Margherita di Savoia Regional Centre for the blind, Rome

This afternoon the Holy Father Francis visited the residents of the Sant'Alessio - Margherita di Savoia Regional Centre for the blind in Rome. The Institute, initially named "Cristoforo Colombo", carries out activities aimed at the social inclusion of the blind and visually impaired.

With this visit, the Pope wishes to follow up the so-called "Mercy Friday" private monthly visits he made during the Jubilee of Mercy, retracing the spiritual and corporal works of mercy in favour of those who live in conditions of physical and social exclusion.

During today's visit, the Pope met with residents in the Centre, people with a sensory impairment linked to vision, blind from birth or as a result of serious diseases, and some with multiple disabilities. They included around 50 children who attend the centre to receive special training to help them in minor everyday activities, and 37 elderly and adults who are permanent residents in the Centre.

Upon arrival, the Pope was welcomed by the president of the Centre, Amedeo Piva, and the director general, Antonio Organtini, who also became blind later in life, as well as all medical and voluntary staff in service.

During his visit, the Holy Father left a gift to the institute and signed the parchment for the Chapel of the Centre to commemorate the event.

The Pope returned to the Vatican at approximately 18:00 h.
