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
BIURO PRASOWE STOLICY APOSTOLSKIEJ دار الصحافة التابعة للكرسي الرسولي

N. 180308f

Thursday 08.03.2018

Audience with participants in the Conference of Rectors of German-speaking Seminaries

At 10.30 this morning, in the Consistory Hall of the Vatican Apostolic Palace, the Holy Father Francis received in audience the participants in the Conference of Rectors of German-speaking Seminaries.

The following is the Pope's address to those present:

Address of the Holy Father

Dear confreres,

I greet you from the heart, thanking you for this fraternal meeting, which strengthens us on the part of the new evangelization of our European continent. I thank the Rector Niehues for his kind words.

As human beings and as priest we trust in the patrimony of our experiences. At the same time, however, we must acknowledge that new and different cultural forms are emerging that do not fit into the models known to us. We have to divest ourselves of certain habits to which we are attached and commit ourselves to what is still unknown to us. But in this too we can always keep our gaze on Jesus Who suffered, died and rose again. In His wounds, as in those of the world, we can recognize the signs of the Resurrection. This certainty always puts us on the road again as witnesses of hope.

Dear confreres, we can not create vocations. We can, instead, be witnesses of the merciful God's calling to us. He calls us, so that we can come out of our "I" and turn to "you". This "you" is the concrete person of the needy, of those who need the closeness of men and the closeness of God. And on this we also want to raise awareness among young people who are preparing for the priesthood. At the same time, we are all always called to a larger community, that of the *kyriakoi*, those who belong to the Lord. This community sustains us so that we can respond with all our heart to God' call.

I commend you and the candidates for the priesthood of the German-speaking countries to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church. And as I ask you to please also pray for me, I cordially impart my apostolic blessing to you and to your communities.