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Greeting of the Holy Father to the children assisted by the “Santa Marta” Paediatric Dispensary

At 10.30 this morning, in the Paul VI Hall, the Holy Father Francis received in audience the children assisted by the “Santa Marta” Paediatric Dispensary in the Vatican.

The following is the Pope’s impromptu address to volunteers, parents and all the children present:

Greeting of the Holy Father

Good morning to you all!

I am happy to be here with you. In this time of Christmas I have thought about whether the baby Jesus had any kind of ‘flu or cold... And what would his mother have done? I am not sure that in Nazareth or in Egypt there was a dispensary, but I know for sure that if Our Lady had lived in Rome, she would have brought him to this dispensary, certainly.

I thank you all, who are the structure and the life of the Dispensary: the doctors, the collaborators, the nurses... and also the collaboration of the young people, the mothers and fathers of the children. It is a body, and in the body there is life. It teaches me something: that to understand the reality of life, it is necessary to lower oneself, just as we stoop to kiss a child. They teach us this. The proud, the haughty cannot understand life, because they are not capable of lowering themselves. All of us – the professionals, the organizers, the nuns, all of us – give many things to the children, but they give us this proclamation, this teaching: lower yourself. Lower yourself, be humble, and in this way you will learn to understand life and to understand people. And all of you have this capacity for lowering yourselves. Thank you very much for this, many thanks!

I wish you a happy Christmas, a good holy Christmas to you all, and I thank you from the heart for what you do, truly. And also, I hope that there will be no indigestion, with such a big cake! Thank you!

