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Audience with hairdressers of the Saint Martin de Porres Committee

At 12.10 today, in the Clementine Hall of the Vatican Apostolic Palace, the Holy Father Francis received in audience the hairdressers of the Saint Martin de Porres Committee, on the occasion of their pilgrimage to Rome.

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

Address of the Holy Father

Dear brothers and sisters,

You have made use of the usual day of rest of your trade to organize a pilgrimage to Rome to visit the tombs of the Apostles and to meet the Successor of Peter. I welcome you with cordial greetings and I thank every one of you, in particular your coordinator, who introduced the meeting. You represent the hairdressers, hairdressers and beauticians gathered in the Saint Martin de Porres Committee, present in many Italian regions.

This pilgrimage is a sign of the importance you attach to the Christian faith, as well as of the religious dimension that characterizes your association. This can already be seen from the fact that it is named after a saint, the Peruvian Martin de Porres. Of mixed race, he was accepted into the Order of the Dominican Fathers only as a tertiary and then as a co-operator brother. He accepted this condition, living an existence of the greatest humility, infused with love. He devoted himself with self-denial to the poor and to the sick, providing health care for them, thanks to the notions he first learned in a pharmacy and then as a student of a barber-surgeon, according to the custom of that time.

May the humble and great figure of Saint Martin de Porres, whom Pope Saint Paul VI, in 1966, proclaimed patron of your trade, help you constantly to witness Christian values. Above all, may he encourage you to practice your profession in a Christian style, treating customers with kindness and courtesy, and always offering them a good and encouraging word, avoiding giving in to the temptation of gossip that can easily creep into your work environment, as we all know. May each one of you, in carrying out your typical professional work, always

act with rectitude, thus making a positive contribution to the common good of society.

I accompany these hopes by invoking the gifts of the Holy Spirit on each of you and on your association, as well as on your collaborators and family members. I ask you to pray for me, and now I give you my Apostolic Blessing.
