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PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLS

# **BOLLETTINO**

SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

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## **Audience with the members of the Pro Petri Sede Association**

This morning, in the Vatican Apostolic Palace, the Holy Father Francis received in audience the members of the Pro Petri Sede Association, in Rome on the occasion of their traditional pilgrimage.

The following is the greeting the Pope addressed to those present during the audience:

### **Greeting of the Holy Father**

Dear brothers and sisters,

I am pleased to welcome you and meet you, as members of the Association Pro Petri Sede, during your pilgrimage to Rome. Like Saint Peter, you have been guided on your journey by love for Christ. And by gathering at the tomb of he who shed his blood for his Master and Saviour, you carry out an act of faith which enables you to renew yourselves spiritually.

This pilgrimage also offers you the opportunity to make your financial and spiritual contribution to the social and charitable works connected with my pastoral mission and the activities of the Holy See. Following in the footsteps of your predecessors, you participate in the missionary action of the Church who fights for the integral human development of every person. Indeed, the human person must always be defended and protected in his integrity and dignity, whatever his origin or social status.

In the unbridled race for possessions, career, honours or power, the weak and small are at times ignored and rejected. In fact, "in the frenzy of running, of achieving everything right now, anyone left behind is viewed as a nuisance. And considered disposable. How many elderly, unborn, disabled and poor persons are considered useless!" (Homily at the World Day of the Poor Holy Mass, 17 November 2019). For this reason the Church, supporting the preferential choice for the poor, relies on men and women of good will and imbued with the Gospel to bring peace and joy of the Risen One to every person in need. Through your charitable contribution to the life of the Church, you become the salt and light (cf. *Mt* 5:13-14) which bring to so many people the flavour of

life.

Dear friends, I express to you my gratitude for your constant support for my responsibility as the Successor of Saint Peter. Today we are faced with various challenges that affect the human family and our common home. Let us place at the centre of our concerns the cry of anguish of peoples who suffer, in particular as a result of wars, the displacement of people, poverty and degradation of the ecosystem. It is urgent that an end be brought to the exploitation of the poorest! It is urgent that there be an end to the atrocities in countries gripped by wars and conflicts that drive so many people into exile!

I would like to insist on caring for our common home, launching once again an appeal for ecological conversion. Your witness of Christian life, which is manifested through generosity and attention to others, invites us all today to counter the generalised climate of individualism, selfishness and indifference, which threaten both peace among people and the environment.

I invite you to remain steadfast in your convictions and in your faith, to be a flame that brings hope to the hearts of the men and women of today. Like Saint Peter, take to the open sea with courage and share the great love that Christ has revealed to us.

I entrust each one of you and your families, and all the members of your association, to the intercession of the Virgin Mary, to Saint Peter and to the Saints of your countries. I impart my heartfelt Apostolic Blessing. And please, do not forget to pray for me. Thank you!

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