

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE
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BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIEGE
PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLS

BOLLETTINO

SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

N. 220109a

Sunday 09.01.2022

Holy Mass with the Baptism of babies

At 9.30 this morning, Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, the Holy Father Francis presided at Holy Mass in the Sistine Chapel, during which he administered the sacrament of Baptism to sixteen newborns, seven boys and nine girls.

The following is the impromptu homily delivered by the Pope after the Gospel reading:

Homily of the Holy Father

Today we commemorate the baptism of the Lord. There is a beautiful liturgical hymn on today's feast day that says that the people of Israel went to the Jordan "barefoot and bare of soul", that is, a soul that wished to be bathed by God, that had no wealth, that was in need of God. These babies too come here today "bare of soul", to receive the justification of God, the strength of Jesus, the strength to go forward in life. They come to receive the Christian identity. It is this, put simply. Your children will receive their Christian identity today. And you, parents and godparents, must safeguard this identity. This is your task during your lifetime: to protect the Christian identity of your children. It is a daily commitment: to make them grow with the light they will receive today. This is all I wanted to say to you, this is today's message: to protect the Christian identity you have brought your children to receive today.

This ceremony is a bit long, and babies feel strange in an unfamiliar environment. Please, they are the protagonists: make sure that they are not too hot, that they feel comfortable... And if they are hungry, nurse them quietly here, in front of the Lord, there is no problem. And if they cry, let them cry, because they have a community spirit, let's say an "orchestral spirit", an ensemble spirit, and all it takes is for one to start - because everyone is musical - and immediately the orchestra starts up! Let them cry, let them feel free. But don't let them feel too hot, and if they are hungry, don't let them stay hungry.

And so, with this peace, we go on with the ceremony. And don't forget: they will receive the Christian identity and your task will be to safeguard this Christian identity. Thank you.