



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE
BOLLETTINO

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIÈGE PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHL
OFICINA DE PRENSA DE LA SANTA SEDE SALA DE IMPRENSA DA SANTA SÉ
BIURO PRASOWE STOLICY APOSTOLSKIEJ دار الصحافة التابعة للكرسي الرسولي

N. 241214a

Saturday 14.12.2024

Audience with participants in the “Christmas Contest” and the Christmas Concert

This morning, in the Vatican Apostolic Palace, the Holy Father Francis received in audience the participants in the “Christmas Contest” and the Christmas Concert 2024.

The following is the Pope’s greeting to those present at the meeting:

Address of the Holy Father

Dear brothers and sisters, welcome!

It is good to start our meeting with such a beautiful song and such a beautiful voice. Well done!

I greet Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça and you, the artists who will perform in today’s Christmas Concert. My greeting also goes to the Pontifical Foundation *Gravissimum Educationis* – Culture for Education, the Salesian Missions (*Missioni don Bosco*) and all who have helped to make this event possible.

I would like briefly to reflect with you on two important realities to which I believe you have much to offer: *peace* and *hope*.

First, *peace*. It is moving to think, here in the company of artists and musicians, that when Jesus was born in the silence of the night, a hymn of peace, sung by “a multitude of the heavenly host” (*Lk 2:13*), suddenly filled the heavens with joy. So it was. Music speaks directly to the human heart in a unique way; it possesses an extraordinary ability to create unity and to foster communion. So I would encourage you to be “angels of peace”

and to invest your talents, your artistry and your lives, as best you can and wherever you find yourselves, in promoting that culture of fraternity and reconciliation our world today needs more than ever.

Second, *hope*. I appreciate the decision to devote today's Concert to this theme, which runs like a thread through your witness of art and solidarity, especially in support of the Salesian missionaries who work with young people throughout the world. This reminds us of the journey that the whole Church is about to make – as “pilgrims of hope” – throughout the coming Jubilee Year.

Christmas reminds us that hope is first and foremost a gift from God. As such, it is “founded on faith and nurtured by charity” (Bull of Indiction of the 2025 Jubilee *Spes Non Confundit*, 3). On the one hand, hope must sink its roots in the fertile soil of communion with the Lord, yet it must also grow and bear fruit through concrete decisions inspired by love, thus filling the present with meaning and opening up new horizons towards the future.

Peace and *hope*. These, then, are the two “vocal lines” of the song that I encourage you to take up and make heard on the streets of today's world, in order to pass it on to future generations. Many people are waiting to receive this gift from you. In a special way, I think of the young people who took part in the Christmas Contest and who join you on stage today. Your presence together is the sign of a wholesome and healthy covenant between the generations.

Friends, the world and the Church need your talents, your creative ideals, they need your generosity and your passion for justice and fraternity. With this in mind, I ask the Lord to pour out his blessings on you and your loved ones. I wish you the best for this Concert and for a Happy Christmas! And I ask you, please, not to forget to pray for me. Thank you.
