



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
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N. 160406b

Wednesday 06.04.2016

Pope Francis praises sport as a universal language for bringing peoples closer

Vatican City, 6 April 2016 – After the catechesis of the general audience, the Pope mentioned that today is the United Nations International Day of Sport for Development and Peace. "Sport is a universal language that brings peoples closer and can contribute to facilitating encounter and overcoming conflicts. I therefore encourage sport to be experienced as a school of virtue in the complete growth of individuals and communities", he said.

In his greetings in various languages, the Holy Father addressed the French-speaking faithful of the diocese of Aix-en-Provence, the young Germans of the Leibfraunenschule of Diessen, the Portuguese-speaking group from Sao Sebastiao do Pontal, pilgrims from the Middle East, the writers, readers and friends of the Polish weekly journal "Niedziela", which celebrates the ninetieth anniversary of its foundation, and the Slovenian parishioners and students of Stara Lubovna. He also greeted faithful from the Netherlands, from the diocese of Amberes. In Italian, he mentioned pilgrims from Castellaneta and Fidenza, participants in the Gubbio "food peace march", the community of the San Juan Damasceno Pontifical College who commemorate their 75th anniversary, the students and families of the Schools of the Congregation of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ, the doctors of the European Paediatric Orthopaedic Society, the faithful of Recco, Alatri, Vietri di Potenza and students from Messina.