



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. 160420c

Wednesday 20.04.2016

To the Austrian Skiing Federation: always be messengers of the strength of unity in sport

Vatican City, 20 April 2016 – Before today's general audience, at 9 a.m. in the study adjacent to the Paul VI Hall, the Pope received in audience a hundred athletes belonging to the Austrian Skiing Federation, whom he addressed briefly.

"When I think of Austria, with her Alpine mountains, I also think of winter sports. Skiing has a great importance and tradition in your country, and all the population supports your exciting competitions with enthusiasm. You are models, especially for many young people. But you are also figures of integration, not only in sport, but in terms of the virtues and values sport represents: commitment, perseverance, determination, fair play, solidarity and team spirit. By your example you contribute to shaping society. May you always be messengers of the unifying power of sport and of acceptance. And, returning to the natural beauty of your country, may you also be messengers of the protection of the environment and of the beauty of God's creation. Thank you for your visit. God bless you all".