



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE **BOLLETTINO**

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIÈGE PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLS
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The Pope praises the Gemelli Hospital's "Perinatal Hospice" initiative

Vatican City, 25 May 2016 – On the occasion of the Congress "Defending Life: the perinatal hospice as a scientific, ethical and human response to prenatal diagnosis" held this morning at the Agostino Gemelli University Hospital, Rome, Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Parolin sent a message on behalf of the Holy Father to Bishop Claudio Giuliodori, general ecclesiastical assistant of the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, to which the institution belongs. The term "perinatal hospice" refers to fetal medicine and prenatal palliative care, as well as the accompanying of the fetus as a patient, also in the case of the most extreme pathological conditions.

Pope Francis greets the participants with affection and expresses his hope that "new targets may be reached in the service of the person and in the progress of medical sciences, with constant reference to perennial human and Christian values, seeking to respond fully to poverty such as the situation of the child with grave pathologies, with the greatest of love, promoting a concept of science that serves and does not select."

His Holiness also expresses his deep satisfaction with what has been achieved so far due to the skilful care of the hospital staff, and invites them to strive daily to implement God's plan for life, protecting it with courage, love and closeness, rejecting the throwaway culture that proposes only paths to death, thinking that suffering can be eliminated by suppressing those who suffer.