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Francis receives a delegation of faithful from Georgia and recalls the joy of his visit

This morning in the Hall of Popes the Holy Father received in audience a delegation of faithful from the apostolic administration of the Caucasus, in Rome to thank him for his visit to Georgia on 30 September. During the encounter, Pope Francis expressed his joy for the Georgians' visit to the Vatican, and remarked that in their country he had found "culture, spirituality, a people who praise Jesus Christ as the Saviour, as it is a Christian people".

"In addition, from an ecumenical perspective I was very impressed by the Patriarch Ilia II: simply, I perceived in him a man of God".

"I know that there are many problems, but I believe that the positive proposal of Bishop Giuseppe Pasotto (apostolic administrator of the Caucasus) will work well; finding the way, without forcing, to journey together slowly", he said, adding that he remembered with great pleasure the encounter in the cathedral: "the questions posed by the laity; I saw the responsibility of the laity in your Church, and this is important, very important! The priests too, the religious, everyone I remember well, and I thank you for this".

"Let us go ahead! This task, like leaven, of helping the mass to grow. Many thanks, and do not forget to pray for me. And now I give you my blessing".