



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE **BOLLETTINO**

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BIURO PRASOWE STOLICY APOSTOLSKIEJ دار الصحافة التابعة للكرسي الرسولي

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Francis baptises 28 children in the Sistine Chapel

For the fourth time in his papacy, this morning in the Sistine Chapel Pope Francis administered the Sacrament of Baptism to 28 newborns, fifteen boys and thirteen girls, on the Feast of the Baptism of Jesus. In his brief impromptu homily he affirmed that he parents of the baptised had asked for their children the sacrament of faith, “a life of faith, because faith is to be lived; to journey on the road of faith and to bear witness to faith. Faith is not reciting the Creed on Sunday, when we go to Mass: it is not just this. Faith is believing that which is the Truth: God the Father sent His Son and the Spirit that vivifies us. But faith also means trusting oneself to God, and you must teach them this, by your example and with your life”.

“And faith is light”, he emphasised. “In the ceremony of Baptism you will be given a lighted candle, as in the first times of the Church. And therefore Baptism, in those times, was called ‘illumination’, because faith illuminates the heart, and enables us to see things in another light. You have asked for faith: the Church gives the faith to your children with Baptism, and you have the task of making it grow, protecting it, so that it becomes a witness for all others. This is the meaning of this ceremony. This is all I wanted to say to you: protect the faith, make it grow, so that it may be a testimony to others”.

At that moment, some of the babies began to cry, and the Pope commented “The concert has started! It is because the babies find themselves in a place they do not know, or they rose earlier than usual. One starts, strikes the chord and then the others imitate. Some cry simply because another one is crying. ... Jesus did the same, you know? I like to think that the first sermon Jesus gave in the stable was a cry, the first. ... And then, since the ceremony is a bit long, some cry out of hunger. If that is the case, mothers, feel free to nurse your babies, without fear, as usual. Just as Our Lady nursed Jesus”.

“Do not forget: you have asked for faith”, he reiterated, “and it is your task to protect the faith, to make it grow, so that it may be a testimony for all of us, for all of us: even for us priests, bishops, all of us. Thank you”.