



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
BIURO PRASOWE STOLICY APOSTOLSKIEJ دار الصحافة التابعة للكرسي الرسولي

N. 190403b

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Audience with the “Rainbow Choir”

At 8.45 this morning, before the General Audience, the Holy Father Francis received in audience, in the room adjacent to the Paul VI Hall, the “Rainbow Choir” of the rest home for sufferers of Alzheimer’s disease, in Bonheiden, Belgium.

The following are the words of greeting he addressed to those present at the meeting:

Greeting of the Holy Father

Thank you, thank you brothers and sisters, many thanks. My secretary here says to me: this is the most beautiful thing he has seen with the Pope.

When I saw that in your house, that cares for sufferers of Alzheimer’s disease, there is a choir called “Rainbow”, I thanked the Lord. Because I think that for you, to sing together is a consolation, a support, that helps to carry on and to bear the burden of the disease, that must certainly weigh upon you. Rather, I think that your song is made more precious by your vulnerability. I think that the fact of putting together our frailties and mutually accepting them, this is the most beautiful “hymn”, the harmony most pleasing to God, a “rainbow” not of perfections, but of *imperfections*!

Then, when I saw the conductor, I thought: he has forgotten the baton! But then I saw that his baton is tenderness. Thank you, Mr. Conductor, because you perform gestures of tenderness that make us all more human. And with your tenderness, all your tenderness, of all of you, today we have fulfilled the fourth commandment: to honour the elderly who are our memory. Perhaps some of them have lost their memory, but they are the symbol of the memory of a people, they are the roots of our homeland, of our humanity. They are the roots, and the young must go there to take the sap from the roots, to carry civilization onwards.

Many thanks, thank you from the heart. And now I will give you my blessing and then I will pass by to greet you all. I ask you to pray for me. *Le Seigneur vous bénisse tous, le Père, le Fils, et le Saint Esprit.*

