



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE **BOLLETTINO**

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Apostolic Journey of His Holiness Francis in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste, and Singapore (2 to 13 September 2024) – Visit to disabled children at Irmãs Alma School

Visit to disabled children at Irmãs Alma School

This morning, after leaving the Apostolic Nunciature, the Holy Father Francis transferred by car to the *Irmãs Alma* School for disabled children.

Upon arrival, at 08.45 (01.45 in Rome), the Pope was welcomed at the entrance to the school by a group of religious sisters of the *Alma* Congregation, and some children in traditional dress who sang a song. He was then accompanied to the Saint Vincent de Paul Hall, where he met with around fifty children and twenty-eight religious sisters. A child gave him the *tais*, the traditional stole. The superior of the *Alma* Congregation, Sister Getrudis Bidi, presented its charitable work to Pope Francis. This was followed by song and dance, and a plaque commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the *Alma* Congregation was then brought to the Holy Father to sign.

At the end, the Holy Father transferred by car to the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Dili.

The following are the Pope's impromptu remarks to the children during his visit:

Words of the Holy Father

There is one thing that always makes me think. When Jesus talks about the final judgement, he says to some people: "Come with me", but he does not say: "Come with me because you were baptized, because you were confirmed, because you were married in the Church, because you did not lie, because you did not steal". No, he says; "Come with me because you took care of me". Jesus says: "Come with me because you took care of me when I was hungry, and you gave me food, when I was thirsty, and you gave me drink, when I was sick, and you visited me", and so on. I call this the sacrament of the poor. A love that encourages, that edifies, that

strengthens.

And that is what we find here: love. Without love, this makes no sense. This is how we come to understand the love of Jesus, who gave his life for us. We cannot understand the love of Jesus unless we start to practise love. Sharing our lives with those who are most in need is a programme, a programme for you, and a programme for every Christian. I want to thank you for what you do and I also want to thank the girls and boys and young people who spoke to us about letting themselves be cared for. They teach us to let ourselves be cared for by God. To let ourselves be cared for by God and not by any number of ideas, or plans, or whims. To let ourselves be taken care of by God. They are our teachers. Thank you for this.

I see this child, what's his name? Silvano. Bring him here. What does Silvano teach us? He teaches us to care. By caring for him we learn to care for others. Look at his face: he is calm, patient, sleeping peacefully. Just as he lets himself be cared for, we too need to learn how to let ourselves be cared for. To let ourselves be cared for by God, who loves us so much, to let ourselves be cared for by Our Lady, who is our Mother.

And now... Now let us pray a Hail Mary to Our Lady, and I will give you the blessing. [Hail Mary and blessing]

After the blessing:

And don't forget. Don't forget that we have to learn to let ourselves be cared for, all of us, as they let themselves be cared for. Thank you.

Exchange of gifts

This is the gift that I am leaving to this house. Pay attention: Saint Joseph takes care of Our Lady, and Our Lady takes care of Jesus. The most important one is the one who lets himself be cared for the most: Jesus. He lets himself be cared for by Mary and Joseph.
