



The Holy See

PASTORAL VISIT OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS TO GENOA

**ENCOUNTER WITH CHILDREN OF THE VARIOUS WARDS
IN "GIANNINA GASLINI" PEDIATRIC HOSPITAL**

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

Saturday, 27 May 2017

[Multimedia]

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

During my [visit to Genoa](#) I could not fail to call briefly at this Hospital where children are being treated, because the suffering of children is surely the hardest to accept. Thus, the Lord calls me to be, even if briefly, close to these children and young people and their families. I repeatedly ask myself the question: why do children suffer? And I find no explanation. I only look to the Crucifix and stop there.

I greet all of you who work in this renowned structure, which for 80 years has dedicated itself with passion and expertise to the treatment and assistance of children, with the important assistance of research. I express my appreciation to the Hospital administration, beginning with the President of the Foundation, the Archbishop of Genoa, the doctors, the paramedical personnel, all the staff in various specializations, as well as the Friars Minor Capuchin and all those who, with love and dedication, assist and help the children in hospital. In fact, they are also in need of your gestures of friendship, your understanding, your affection and fatherly and motherly support.

This Institute sprang from an act of love of Senator Gerolamo Gaslini. To honour his daughter, who had died at a tender age, he founded it by divesting himself of all his assets: businesses, factories, real estate, money and even his home. Hence, this Hospital, recognized and appreciated in Italy and in the world, has a special role: to continue to be a symbol of generosity

and solidarity. In the Hospital's Deed of Foundation, Gaslini established: "It is my steadfast wish that this Institute be founded on and guided by the Catholic faith ... which shall be the leaven of all treatment and shall comfort all suffering". We know that faith operates above all through charity and without it, it is dead. Therefore, I encourage all of you to carry out your delicate work inspired by charity, thinking often of the Gospel's "Good Samaritan": attentive to the needs of your young patients, gently stooping over their fragility, and seeing the Lord in them. Those who serve the sick with love, serve Jesus, who opens the Kingdom of Heaven to us.

I hope that this Hospital, faithful to its mission, may continue its esteemed work of treatment and research through the participation and the generous and disinterested contribution of all sectors and of all levels. For my part, I accompany you with prayer and the Lord's blessing, which I wholeheartedly invoke upon you, upon all the patients and their families.