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## Elderly and infirm priests, protagonists of the sixth Mercy Friday

Vatican City, 18 June 2016 – Elderly and infirm priests were the protagonists of the sixth "Mercy Friday", on which the Pope went to greet them in two communities in the diocese of Rome. In the month of the Jubilee of Priests, after the meditation on 2 June in the Roman Basilicas and the celebration of the Eucharist in St. Peter's Square the following Sunday, Francis wished to express his closeness and care for those priests who were unable to participate physically in the jubilee celebrations but who were always present in the Pope's prayers and heart.

The Holy Father left the Vatican at 4 p.m. to visit the Monte Tabor community, which houses eight priests formerly from different dioceses, suffering from various forms of illness and accompanied by a permanent deacon, Ermes Luparia, a former Air Force colonel and now a specialist in psychology, dedicated to the service of companionship in the spirit of the Salvatorian Fathers. The Pope met with the priests in the chapel, listened to them and prayed with them.

"After devoting their life to the service of the Church and the faithful, now these priests live in a retreat, and few people remember them. But the Pope does, and by this visit he hoped to show this to each one of them, with his concrete affection ... and he once more gave an effective example of mercy, attention and gratitude to all the community of Rome and the Church. The Jubilee consists, to a great extent, of works of mercy both corporal and spiritual", states a note from the Holy See Press Office.

Yesterday's event was the sixth sign of mercy carried out by Francis during the Jubilee: in January he visited the rest home for the elderly and infirm in a vegetative state; in February, a community for the rehabilitation of drug users in Castel Gandolfo; in March, on Holy Thursday, a reception centre for refugees (CARA) in Castelnuovo di Porto; in April, a refugee camp on the Greek island of Lesbos; and in May, the "Chicco" community for people with serious mental disabilities in Ciampino.