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Greetings to pilgrims: the feasts of St. Vincent de Paul and of the three archangels

In his greetings to pilgrims from various countries the Pope welcomed faithful from the diocese of Ostrava-Opava, accompanied by their bishop Frantisek Václav, and entrusted them to the intercession of their patron St. Wenceslas, whose liturgical memory is celebrated today. Among the French-speaking pilgrims, he greeted pilgrims from the diocese of Belfort-Montbéliard, with Msgr. Dominique Blanchet, from the French seminary of Rome, from the parliamentary delegation of the French National Assembly, and those participating in the interdiocesan pilgrimage of Algeria.

The bishop of Rome offered special greetings to the seminarians of the North American Pontifical College and their families, in Rome for the diaconal ordination to be celebrated this morning.

He greeted a delegation from the diocese of Rome which has prepared the Family Week, to be held from 2 to 8 October, and for whom he lit a torch as a “symbol of the love of the families of Rome and the whole world”.

“I address a special thought to the Archbishop of Potenza and the group of workers from Basilicata, made redundant, and hope that the grave employment situation may find a positive solution through the efforts of all to open up pathways of hope. The unemployment rate cannot continue to rise!”

He went on to greet the participants in the General Chapter of the Tertiary Capuchin Sisters of the Holy Family, the Elderly Association with the cyclists of the General Group; participants in the “Italian Wonder Ways” initiative with Bishop Paolo Giulietti; and the faithful of Pieve di Soligo, present to commemorate the anniversary of the death of John Paul I.

“In tomorrow’s liturgy we celebrate the feast of the archangels Michael, Gabriel and Raphael. They are ‘ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation’”, he said to Polish pilgrims. We should be aware of their invisible presence. Let us invoke them in prayer so that in every moment they remind us of the presence of God, supporting us in the struggle against evil and leading us safely on the roads of our life”.

He conveyed a special thought to the Mexican people, inviting their representatives in the Square to sing to Our

Lady of Guadalupe a tune they had sung at the beginning of the audience, recalling the sufferings of this people.

The Pontiff likewise greeted the pilgrims of the Portuguese-speaking Catholic community of Germany, Slovenian faithful from the dioceses of Celje, Murska Sobota and Novo Mesto, accompanied by their respective bishops. He also cordially greeted the German-speaking faithful present, especially the numerous young people and in particular the seminarians from the diocese of Graz-Seckau and Gurk-Klagenfurt, and the students of the Mädchen-Realschule Maria-Ward of Munich.

Finally, he addressed Italian faithful from the diocese of Ascoli Piceno, one of the places affected by the earthquake last August, with their bishop, Giovanni D'Ercole, and remarked, "You too have suffered. He also expressed his joy at receiving faithful from Otranto, accompanied by Archbishop Donato Negro; and from Modena-Nonantola. He urged them all to return to their local churches as witnesses of mercy.

The Holy Father concluded his greetings in Italian by addressing, as usual, the young, the ailing and newly-weds. "May the example of charity of St. Vincent de Paul, whom we remembered yesterday as the patron of charitable associations, lead you, dear young people, to fulfil your future plans with a cheerful and impartial service to your neighbour. May it help you, dear infirm, to face suffering with your gaze turned to Christ. And may it encourage you, dear newly-weds, to build a family always open to the poor and to the gift of life".
