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Greetings to pilgrims from various countries: memory of Sts. Cyril and Methodius, patrons of Europe

After today's catechesis the Pope greeted the faithful and pilgrims from different countries present in the Paul VI Hall, including French speakers from France and Switzerland, and English speakers from the United Kingdom, Denmark and the United States of America. Among Spanish speakers he gave a warm welcome to the teachers and students of the diocesan seminary of Orihuela-Alicante. "Msgr. Murgui", he said, referring to their bishop, "runs a good seminary!"

He gave special greetings to the group of German-speaking Catholic and Evangelical priests from Carinthia, Austria, accompanied by Msgr. Alois Schwartz, and Arabic speakers from the Middle East.

"Yesterday we remembered the patron saints of Europe: Cyril the monk and Methodius the bishop", he said, addressing Polish faithful. "These two brothers from Thessaloniki who brought the Gospel to the Slav peoples. Today too they remind Europe, and all of us, of the need to maintain the unity of the faith, tradition and Christian culture, and to live the Gospel every day. To all of you who face these challenges, supporting them with your prayers, I cordially impart my blessing".

Finally, he greeted Italian-speaking faithful, especially the association "*Nessuno escluso*" from Taranto, urging them always to promote "an inclusive culture for people who are alone and without fixed abode". He thanked the two choirs present, *Prealpi* of Villapedernano-Erbusco and *Noti Ascendenti* of Sant'Eufemia-Lamezia Terme, adding, "When we want something, this is what to do! This is what we must do with prayer, when we ask something of the Lord: insist, insist, insist. It is a good example of prayer".

He again referred to Sts. Cyril and Methodius when addressing the young, the sick and newly-weds. "May their example help you, dear young people to become missionary disciples in every environment", he said. "May their tenacity encourage you, dear sick people, to offer your sufferings for the conversion of those who are distant; and may their love for the Lord enlighten you, dear newly-weds, so you make the Gospel the fundamental rule of your family life".

