

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE
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BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIEGE
PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLS

BOLLETTINO

SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

N. 200112a

Sunday 12.01.2020

Holy Mass in the Sistine Chapel with rite of Baptism of babies

At 9.30 this morning, Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, in the Sistine Chapel, the Holy Father Francis presided at the Holy Mass during which he administered the Sacrament of Baptism to 32 newborns, 17 boys and 15 girls.

The following is the impromptu homily the Holy Father pronounced after the reading of the Holy Gospel:

Homily of the Holy Father

Like Jesus Who went to be baptized, you bring your children.

Jesus answers John: "It is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness" (cf. *Mt* 3:15). Baptizing a child is an act of righteousness for him. And why? Because we in Baptism give him a treasure, we in Baptism give him a pledge: the Holy Spirit. The child comes out [of Baptism] with the power of the Spirit within: the Spirit Who will defend him, will help him, throughout his life. That is why it is so important to baptize them as children, so that they grow up with the power of the Holy Spirit.

This is the message I would like to give you today. You bring your children today, [so that they may have] the Holy Spirit within them. And take care that they grow up with the light, with the power of the Holy Spirit, through catechesis, help, by teaching, with the examples you set at home... This is the message.

I do not wish to say any more loudly. Just a warning. Children are not used to coming to the Sistine, it is the first time! They are not used to being cooped up in an environment that is also a bit hot. And they are not used to being dressed like this for a party as beautiful as today. They will feel a little uncomfortable at some point. And one will start crying... - The concert hasn't started yet! - but one will start, then another... Do not be afraid, let the children cry and shout. But rather, if your baby cries and complains, perhaps it is because he is too hot: take something off; or because he is hungry: nurse him, here, yes, always in peace. Something I also said last year: they have a "choral" dimension: you just need one to give the go-ahead and they all start, and the concert will start. Do not be afraid. When a child cries in church, it is a beautiful sermon. Make sure the baby feels good, and

let us get on with it.

Don't forget: you are bringing the Holy Spirit into the children.
