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Audience with paediatric cancer patients of the Wrocław Oncological Clinic, Poland

This morning, the Holy Father Francis received in audience a group of paediatric cancer patients from the Wrocław Oncological Clinic, Poland, to whom he addressed the following words of greeting:

Greeting of the Holy Father

Thank you for coming! I am pleased to see you and to greet you. Many thanks, and welcome! [To the translator: *How do you say "Many thanks, welcome" in Polish?*]

Dear friends, I am here with you to encourage you, to invite you to be apostles of God's love. Your journey in life is a bit difficult, because you have to be cured, to overcome illness or to live with illness, and this is not easy. Very often, in life, we find ourselves in the situation of not having the strength to go forward. But you are never alone! Jesus is always close to you, and he says to you: "Go, go, go on! I am with you". "I will take you by the hand", says Jesus, like when you were an infant learning to take your first steps.

Dear children, Jesus is always by our side *to give us hope*. Always, even in the moments of sickness, even in the most painful moments, even in the most difficult moments. The Lord is there!

And also, your relatives, doctors, friends, they help you keep going forward. Think of your mother, who brought you into the world, and of your father.

God loves you, dear children. You are loved by him: do you want to be apostles of God's love in the Church and in the world? Jesus needs you for this witness. He entrusts his plans to you and he asks: do you want to be my apostles of God's love? Answer "yes" to him with enthusiasm and bring the joy of God's love to others.

If someone finds himself alone and feels abandoned, let us not forget that Our Lady is always close to us, especially when the burden of illness, with all its problems, makes itself felt: she is there close by, just as she

was next to her Son Jesus when everyone had abandoned him. Mary is always there, next to us, with her maternal tenderness. Let us think often of Our Lady, reciting a *Hail Mary*. Let us pray the *Hail Mary*...

I bless you from my heart. And please, do not forget to pray for me. I bless you from my heart. Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And pray for me.
