



## A Great Gift

Today was a very special day because we met Pope Francis: an emotionally intense encounter, which any words of mine could risk impoverishing. We arrived as daughters eager to meet their father and that is exactly what we found.

He came into the room with great simplicity and his first words expressed his astonishment at seeing so many colors and hearing voices and sounds that brought to mind distant places and peoples. "52 countries from every part of the world!" he marveled as we gathered around him.

His words to us were a genuine mandate, addressed to all the Daughters of St. Paul, of every age and language. Forceful and intense, they gave our apostolic conscience a good jolt. "You were born of the Word," he said to us. "Take the Gospel [to others] fearlessly. It means setting out with empathy toward all peoples; it means placing all your energies at the service of your mission; it means constantly seeking paths of closeness to others and of compassion toward them...compassion! That word means a lot to me and I want to emphasize it," he reiterated. "You were born to be missionaries. Don't let yourselves be blocked by weariness and resignation. Resignation is a worm that enters the soul and eats the heart. Be brave! Don't resort to words like 'unfortunately....' You have traveled a long road and you still have a long way to go. Nourished by the Word, move forward! Take risks! Seek ways to proclaim the Word with the fantasy of communication. There is no time to lose!"

What can we say? What can we add? Nothing except to invite everyone to read the Pope's complete message to us—a beautiful and intense message for all those who find the meaning of their lives in the Word.

We have nothing further to add except this:

"Dear Pope Francis, we are praying for you and will continue to do so. You can count on us! We all carry you in our prayer, especially our elderly and sick sisters: they offer their sufferings for you and for the Church at every moment. We are with you, dear Francis. You are the transparent face of a Church on its way, the face of the gratuitous tenderness of God. We are with you, ready to go out and activate that missionary turning point that the Church and world await."

We'll be sending all of you our last news flash tomorrow. The Chapter is almost over and we are preparing to give thanks for everything.

We'll be in touch soon, in the confidence that you always look forward with great anticipation to our news! #staytune #capitolo\_ON #restiamoconnessi