



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

TO MEXICO

(12-18 FEBRUARY 2016)

VISIT TO THE “FEDERICO GÓMEZ” PEDIATRIC HOSPITAL

GREETING OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

Mexico City

Sunday, 14 February 2016

[Multimedia]

Madam First Lady,

Madam Secretary for Health,

Director,

Members of the Board of Governors,

Families here present,

Dear Children,

Friends one and all,

Good afternoon. I thank God for granting me this opportunity to come and visit you, to join you and your families in this hospital. To share a little of your life and of those who work here: the doctors, nurses, personnel, and volunteers who help; so many people who are working here for you.

There is a very brief passage in the Gospel which tells us something of Jesus' childhood. He was little, just like some of you. One day, his parents, Joseph and Mary, took him up to the Temple to present him to God. And while there they met an old man called Simeon who, upon seeing Jesus, was very moved and filled with joy and gratitude. He took Jesus in his arms and held him close, and began to bless the Lord. Looking at Jesus inspired him in two ways: the feeling of gratitude and the desire to bless. In other words, this elderly man felt the urge to thank God and to bless

him. Simeon is “the uncle” who teaches us these two attitudes in life: gratitude and then blessing.

I bless you and the doctors bless you; all of you, dear children, receive a blessing each time you are cared for by the nurses, the personnel and everyone who works here. But you also have to learn how to bless them and to ask Jesus to look after them so that they can continue caring for you. Being here, (and not only because of my age), I feel I can relate well with these two lessons of Simeon. On the one hand, entering here and seeing your eyes, your smiles — some impish — your faces, has filled me with a desire to give thanks. Thank you for the kind way that you welcomed me, thank you for recognizing the tenderness with which you are cared for here, the tenderness with which you are accompanied. Thank you for the efforts of many who are doing their best so that you can get better quickly.

It is very important that we feel cared for and accompanied, to feel loved and to know that all these workers here are looking for the best way to care for us. To each of these people, I say, “Thank you”. “Thank you”.

And at the same time, I wish to bless you. I ask God to bless you, and to accompany you and your families, and all those people who work in this home and try to ensure that your smiles grow day by day. May God bless each person... not only doctors but also those who provide “kindness-therapy” thus making the time spent here more enjoyable. This “kindness-therapy” is so important! So essential! Sometimes a caress can greatly help the process of healing.

Have you ever heard of the Indian Juan Diego? Or not? [The children respond: “Yes!”. Let’s see now, all those who know him, raise your hands. When his uncle was sick, he was quite worried and distressed. Then, the Virgin of Guadalupe appeared to him and said, “Let not your heart be disturbed or upset by anything. Am I not here with you, I who am your mother?”

We have Mary as our Mother, and so let us ask her to give us the gift of her son, Jesus. And now, I want to ask all you children one thing: let’s close our eyes, close them, and ask her to give us what our hearts seek today. A little bit of silence with our eyes closed, and asking her what comes from our hearts. And now, together let’s say to our Mother:

Hail Mary...

May the Lord and the Blessed Virgin of Guadalupe remain with you always. Thank you very much. And please, do not forget to pray for me. Do not forget! May God bless you.

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