
Pope Francis: audience, “instead of coming near you, I greet you from a distance”. “Never silence a crying baby in Church”

“We need to change a bit the way the audience is conducted because of the coronavirus”. Pope Francis made these off-the-cuff remarks at the beginning of today’s general audience catechesis - the last one dedicated to the Psalms. “You are separated, with the protection of masks as well, and I am here, a bit distant, and I cannot do what I always do, coming near you, because every time I do that all of you come together and do not maintain distance and there is the danger of contagion for you”, the Pope continued, having entered the Paul VI Hall directly from the stage, at about 9.10. “I apologise for this, but it is for your safety”, he told the faithful. “Instead of coming near you, we greet each other from a distance, but know that I am near you with my heart. I hope that you understand why I am doing this”. Then Pope Francis revealed that while the readers were reading the biblical passage, his attention was caught by a baby who was crying. “I was watching the mamma who was cuddling and nursing the baby”, he went on to say off the cuff: “This is what God does with us, like that mamma. With what tenderness she was trying to comfort and nurse the baby! They are beautiful images. And when it happens that a baby cries in Church”, then “feel there is the tenderness of a mamma which is the symbol of God’s tenderness with us”. “Never silence a crying baby in Church, never, because it is the voice that attracts God’s tenderness”, the Pope admonished, before thanking the mother for her witness.

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