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VATICAN - The Year of Faith ends in the sign of the mission

Vatican City (Agenzia Fides) - The Holy Father closed on Sunday, November 24 , Solemnity of Christ the King, the Year of Faith, which was inaugurated by Pope Benedict XVI on 11 October 2012 on the fiftieth anniversary of the 'opening of the Second Vatican Council, with specific references to the mission and the universality of the Church. First of all, the exposure of the relics of the Apostle Peter, who concluded his preaching with martyrdom, placed near the altar during Mass, then the collection of donations for the people of the Philippines affected by the recent typhoon Haiyan. In his homily, the Holy Father then greeted with particular affection the Patriarchs and Major Archbishops of the Eastern Catholic Churches present, and pointed out that: "the exchange of peace which I will share with them, is above all a sign of the appreciation of the Bishop of Rome for these communities, which have confessed the name of Christ with exemplary faithfulness , often at a high price".
At the end of the Mass, the Pope delivered his first Apostolic Exhortation , aptly titled "Evangelii gaudium", to 36 representatives of God's people from 18 different countries. As Archbishop Rino Fisichella, President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization had pointed out before, "believing also means participating with others the joy of Christ. The Pope’s Exhortation, therefore, becomes a mission that is entrusted to all the baptized in order to become an evangelist".
Before reciting the Angelus, Pope Francis recalled: "On this day, our gratitude goes to the missionaries who, over the centuries, have proclaimed the Gospel and spread the seed of faith in many parts of the world; among them the Blessed Junipero Serra, Spanish Franciscan missionary". He then invited to pray the Angelus: "With this prayer we invoke the protection of Mary, especially for our brothers and sisters who are persecuted because of their faith, and they are many". (SL) (Agenzia Fides 25/11/2013)

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