



The Holy See

PASTORAL VISIT OF THE HOLY FATHER POPE FRANCIS
TO NOMADELFIA, IN THE DIOCESE OF GROSSETO,
TO MEET THE COMMUNITY FOUNDED BY DON ZENO SALTINI;
AND TO LOPPIANO (FLORENCE) IN THE DIOCESE OF FIESOLE,
TO VISIT THE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE OF THE FOCOLARE MOVEMENT

MEETING WITH THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY FOUNDED BY DON ZENO SALTINI

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS

Nomadelfia (Grosseto)

Thursday, 10 May 2018

[[Multimedia](#)]

Dear Brothers and Sisters of Nomadelfia!

I have come here among you in memory of Fr Zeno Saltini and to express my encouragement to your community, which he founded. I greet you all with affection: your president, Francesco Matterazzo, the parish priest Fr Ferdinando Neri, the many friends and the Bishop of Grosseto, in whose diocese you are included and who carefully follows the path of Fr Zeno's work. Nomadelfia is a prophetic organization which proposes the establishment of a new civilization, implementing the Gospel as a good and beautiful form of life.

Your Founder dedicated himself with apostolic zeal to preparing the soil for the sowing of the Gospel, so that it could bear fruits of new life. Having grown up amid the fields of the fertile plains of Emilia, he knew that, when the right season arrives, it is time to put one's hand to the plow and to prepare the soil for sowing. Jesus' words, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God" (Lk 9:62), were fixed in his mind. He repeated them often,

perhaps foreseeing the difficulties he would have in daily life, incarnating in a practical way the renewing power of the Gospel.

The *Law of Fraternity*, which characterizes your life, was the dream and the objective of Fr Zeno's entire existence; he desired a community of life inspired by the model outlined in the Acts of the Apostles: "the company of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had everything in common" (4:32). I exhort you to continue this way of life, trusting in the power of the Gospel and of the Holy Spirit, through your clear Christian witness.

Before the suffering of children orphaned or marked by disadvantage, Fr Zeno realized that the only language they understood was that of love. Therefore, he was able to identify a particular form of society where there is no room for isolation or loneliness, but the principle of cooperation among different families was in force, wherein the members recognized each other as brothers and sisters in the faith.

Thus in Nomadelfia, in response to a special vocation of the Lord, bonds stronger than those of kinship are established. A *consanguinity with Jesus* is attained, precisely of those who are renewed by the water and by the Holy Spirit and according to the words of the divine Master: "whoever does the will of God is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Mk 3:35). This special bond of consanguinity and familiarity is also manifested in the mutual relationships among the people: everyone calls one another by name, never by surname, and in everyday relationships the informal 'you' is used.

I would also like to highlight another prophetic sign, a sign of the great humanity of Nomadelfia: that of the loving attention toward the elderly who, even when they are not in good health, stay with the family and are supported by the whole community of brothers and sisters. May you continue on this path, incarnating the model of fraternal love, also through works and visible signs, in the multitude of contexts where evangelical charity calls you, but always preserving the spirit of Fr Zeno who wanted Nomadelfia to be "light" and essential in its structures. Before a world that is hostile at times to the ideals preached by Christ, you do not hesitate to respond with the joyous and peaceful witness of your life, inspired by the Gospel.

I thank you very much for the warmth and family atmosphere with which you have welcomed me. It has been a brief encounter but full of meaning and emotion; I will carry it with me, especially in prayer. I will carry your faces: the faces of a great family with the genuine flavour of the Gospel.

And now, savouring the joy of all being brothers and sisters because we are children of the heavenly Father, let us recite the *Our Father* together.

[*Our Father....*]

And now I impart to all of you, to your families, to your loved ones, the Apostolic Blessing, invoking upon each one the light and strength of the Holy Spirit.

[*Blessing*]

And pray for me; do not forget.

At the end of the encounter, Pope Francis thanked all those present, in particular for the meaningful gifts he had received.

Thank you very much for your welcome. And for the gifts, which are “family gifts”, this is very important: they are gifts that come from the heart, from the family, from here; simple but rich in meaning.

Thank you very much! Thank you for the hospitality, for your joy!

And go forward! Thank you.