

**LETTER OF THE HOLY FATHER TO THE BISHOP OF ASSISI
TO MARK THE INAUGURATION OF THE SHRINE OF RENUNCIATION**

16 April 2017

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[...] When I came to visit the Room of Renunciation, you asked me to meet primarily with a representative group of the poor. In this most eloquent Room, they bore witness to the scandalous reality of a world that is still deeply marked by the divide between an endless number of the poor who often lack the basic necessities, and the miniscule number of the wealthy who possess the greatest part of the wealth and who presume to determine the destiny of all of humanity. Unfortunately, after 2,000 years since the proclamation of the Gospel and after eight centuries since Francis' witness, we are faced with a phenomenon of "global inequity" and an "economy that kills" (cf. Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 52-60). The very day before my arrival in Assisi, many migrants lost their life in the waters of Lampedusa. Speaking in this place of "renunciation", affected also by the emotion caused by such a tragic event, I felt the whole truth of what young Francis had testified to: only by reaching out to the poor, in his time represented especially by those suffering from leprosy, by practicing mercy toward them, could he experience that "sweetness of soul and body" (*Testament*, ff 110).