

Exhortations by Pope Francis to the local young people and those around the world



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“**W**hen God touches the heart of a young man or woman, they become capable of doing tremendous things. The ‘great things’ that the Almighty accomplished in the life of Mary also speak to our own journey in life, which is not a meaningless meandering, but a pilgrimage that, for all its uncertainties and sufferings, can find its fulfillment in God (cf. Angelus, 15 August 2015). You may say to me: ‘But Father, I have my limits, I am a sinner, what can I do?’ When the Lord calls us, he doesn’t stop at what we are or what we have done. On the contrary, at the very moment that he calls us, he is looking ahead to everything we can do, all the love we are capable of giving. Like the young Mary, you can allow your life to become a means for making the world a better place. Jesus is calling you to leave your mark in life, your mark on history, both your own and that of so many others.” — **CF. MESSAGE OF POPE FRANCIS ADDRESS AT THE VIGIL, KRAKOW, 30 JULY 2016 FOR THE THIRTY-SECOND WORLD YOUTH DAY 2017**

“**I** am reminded of the words which God spoke to Abraham: ‘Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you.’ (Gen 12:1) These words are now also addressed to you. They are words of a Father who invites you to ‘go,’ to set out towards a future which is unknown but one which will surely lead to fulfillment, a future towards which He Himself accompanies you. I invite you to hear God’s voice resounding in your heart through the breath of the Holy Spirit. When God said to Abram, ‘Go!’, what did he want to say? He certainly did not say to distance himself from his family or withdraw from the world. Abram received a compelling invitation, a challenge, to leave everything and go to a new land. What is this ‘new land’ for us today, if not a more just and friendly society which you, young people, deeply desire and wish to build to the very ends of the earth?” — **LETTER OF POPE FRANCIS AT THE OCCASION OF THE PRESENTATION OF THE DOCUMENT OF THE 15TH ORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS, JANUARY 13 2017**

“**W**hen people work together looking for each other’s good, the world reveals itself in all its beauty. I ask you, therefore, not to let the world be ruined by those without scruples, who only think about exploiting it and destroying it. I invite you to flood the places where you live with the joy and enthusiasm typical of your youthful age, to irrigate the world and history with the joy that comes from the Gospel, from having met a Person: Jesus, who has enthralled you and has drawn you to be with Him. Do not let your youth be stolen from you. Do not allow anyone to slow and obscure the light that Christ puts in your face and in your heart. Be weavers of relationships signed by trust, by sharing, by openness even to ends of the world. Do not raise walls of division: do not raise walls of division! Build bridges, like this extraordinary one that you are crossing in spirit, and that links the shores of two oceans.” — **VIDEO MESSAGE OF POPE FRANCIS AT THE CANADIAN YOUTH FORUM, OCTOBER 23 2017**

“**I** also want to remind you of Jesus’s words, those He said one day to the disciples who asked him, ‘Rabbi, where do you live?’ And Jesus answered, ‘Come and see.’ Jesus also turns His gaze on you and invites you to go to Him. Dear young people, have you encountered this gaze? Have you heard this voice? Have you felt that impulse to get up and be on the way? I am sure that, although din and dizziness seem to reign in the world, this call continues to resonate in your soul, to open it to full joy. This will be possible to the extent that you, through accompaniment of expert guides, undertake an itinerary of discernment in order to discover God’s plan for your life ... the plan He has for the life of each one of you, even when your journey is marked by danger and missteps, God, rich in mercy, tenders His hand to pick you up again. The world, the Church, are in need of courageous young people, who are not cowed in the face of difficulties, who face their trials and keep their eyes and

hearts open to reality, so that no one should be rejected or subjected to injustice or to violence, or deprived of human dignity.” — **VIDEO MESSAGE OF POPE FRANCIS AT THE CANADIAN YOUTH FORUM, OCTOBER 23 2017**

“ I’m sure your heart, a young heart, will not be closed to the cry for help of so many of your peers who seek freedom, work, study, a chance to make sense of their lives. I count on your willingness, your commitment, your ability to face important challenges and dare to make the future, to take decisive steps along the path of change. Young people let Christ reach you. Let Him speak to you, embrace you, console you, heal your wounds, dissolve your doubts and fears, and you shall be ready for the fascinating adventure of life, that precious and inestimable gift that God places every day in your hands. Go to meet Jesus, be with Him in prayer, entrust yourselves to Him, give your whole life over to His merciful love and your faith, and your faith will be the luminous witness of generosity and of the joy there is in following Him, wherever He should lead you. Dear young people of Canada, the beauty of a life realized in following the Lord might open wide before you. For this reason I entrust you to Mary of Nazareth, a young person like you, to whom God turned His loving gaze, that He might take you by the hand. Let yourselves be taken by Mary’s, and let her guide you to the joy of saying a full and generous, ‘Here I am!’ Jesus watches you and awaits a ‘Here I am!’ from each of you.” — **VIDEO MESSAGE OF POPE FRANCIS AT THE CANADIAN YOUTH FORUM, OCTOBER 23 2017**

“ My friends, Jesus is the Lord of risk, he is the Lord of the eternal ‘more.’ Jesus is not the Lord of comfort, security and ease. Following Jesus demands a good dose of courage, a readiness to trade in the sofa for a pair of walking shoes and to set out on new and uncharted paths. To blaze trails that open up new horizons capable of spreading joy, the joy that is born of God’s love and wells up in your hearts with every act of mercy. To take the path of the ‘craziness’ of our God, who teaches us to encounter him in the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the sick, the friend in trouble, the prisoner, the refugee and the migrant, and our neighbours

who feel abandoned. To take the path of our God, who encourages us to be politicians, thinkers, social activists. The God who encourages us to devise an economy marked by greater solidarity than our own. In all the settings in which you find yourselves, God’s love invites you bring the Good News, making of your own lives a gift to him and to others. This means being courageous, this means being free!” — **MESSAGE OF POPE FRANCIS ADDRESS AT THE VIGIL PRAYER ON JULY 30 2016 FOR THE APOSTOLIC JOURNEY AT THE XXXI WORLD YOUTH DAY 2017**

“ Today, my friends, Jesus is inviting you, calling you, to leave your mark on life, to leave a mark on history, your own and that of many others as well. Life nowadays tells us that it is much easier to concentrate on what divides us, what keeps us apart. People try to make us believe that being closed in on ourselves is the best way to keep safe from harm. Today, we adults need you to teach us, how to live in diversity, in dialogue, to experience multiculturalism not as a threat but an opportunity. You are an opportunity for the future. Have the courage to teach us, have the courage to show us that it is easier to build bridges than walls! We need to learn this. Together we ask that you challenge us to take the path of fraternity. May you point the finger at us, if we choose the path of walls, the path of enmity, the path of war. To build bridges... Do you know the first bridge that has to be built? It is a bridge that we can build here and now, by reaching out and taking each other’s hand. Build this human bridge; take each other’s hand, all of you: it is the first, it is the model. There is always a risk, as I said the other day, of offering your hand and no one taking it. But in life we need to take a risk, for the person who does not take a risk never wins. With this bridge we can move forwards. This is a great bridge of brotherhood, and would that the powers of this world might learn to build it ... not for pictures and ulterior motives, but for building ever-bigger bridges. May this human bridge be the beginning of many, many others; in that way, it will leave a mark.” — **MESSAGE OF POPE FRANCIS ADDRESS AT THE VIGIL PRAYER ON JULY 30 2016 FOR THE APOSTOLIC JOURNEY AT THE XXXI WORLD YOUTH DAY 2017**