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Message of the Holy Father, signed by the Cardinal Secretary of State, for the 46th European meeting of young people organized by the Taizé Community

The following is the Message sent by the Holy Father Francis, signed by Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Parolin, on the occasion of the 46th European meeting of young people organized by the Taizé Community, to take place in Ljubljana, Slovenia, from 28 December 2023 to 1 January 2024:

Message

Dear young people,

His Holiness Pope Francis sends you his greetings on the occasion of the 46th European Meeting organized by the Taizé Community on the theme "Walking together",. He also expresses his closeness to all of you who are involved at different levels in the life of the Church and of your different nations.

The recent World Youth Days have enabled you to live, as Church and as community, the beautiful experience of friendship with God and with others. You are the today of God, the today of the Church! The Church needs you in order to be fully herself. As Church, you are the Body of the Risen Lord present in the world.

Dear friends, we live in a world full of noise, where the value of silence and listening are stifled. In this context, I invite you to rediscover the deeper dimension of listening. Listening is an act of love. It is at the heart of trust. Without listening, little can grow or develop. Listening enables the necessary space to be given to the other in order to exist. We often have the impression that those who shout the loudest are worthy of being heard. Unfortunately, today violence increasingly gains ground. We live in a difficult time, with conflicts and wars waged throughout the world, because no-one listens any more. I urge you to dare to build a different world, a world of listening, dialogue and openness, to "point to ideals other than those of this world, testifying to the beauty of generosity, service, purity, perseverance, forgiveness, fidelity to our personal vocation, prayer, the pursuit of justice and the common good, love for the poor, and social friendship" (*Christus vivit*, 36).

One of the challenges you must face is that of walking together, in order to work for the qualitative transformation of life in our societies. Walking together means barring the way to marginalization, isolation, exclusion and the rejection of a category of people. You become builders of bridges between peoples, cultures and religions, for a stable and open world. We must commit ourselves to living like our Master and Lord Jesus who did not exclude anyone from his path. He recognized the presence of God in those who were at the margins of society, and even those who did not belong to his people.

Faced with today's challenges and our own fragility, certain people sometimes feel "homeless". When we face these challenges together, there can be experiences of beauty, of transcendence, which help us to discover the spark that makes us start again with new vitality. Dear young people, the Holy Father is counting on you and he trusts you, the Church trusts you. Through your words and actions, send a powerful message to our world, which rejects the vulnerable. Make your dreams of love, justice and peace a reality, starting with yourselves. Live in the present. Don't sacrifice your precious youth on the altar of superficial pleasures. Don't let yourselves be robbed of your dreams, and help to "build a society worthy of the name" (*Fratelli tutti*, 71).

Entrusting each of you and your families to the Lord, through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, Pope Francis grants you his Apostolic Blessing with all his heart. He asks you to pray for him.

Cardinal Pietro Parolin
Secretary of State to His Holiness
