



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY
OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
TO THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 6th ASIAN YOUTH DAY
(13-18 AUGUST 2014)

MEETING WITH THE LEADERS OF THE APOSTOLATE OF THE LAITY

ADDRESS OF POPE FRANCIS *Spirituality Centre (Kkottongnae)*
Saturday, 16 August 2014

Video

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am grateful to have this opportunity to meet you, who represent the many expressions of the flourishing apostolate of the laity in Korea: it has always flourished! It continues to flourish! I thank the President of the Catholic Lay Apostolate Council, Mr Paul Kwon Kil-joong, for his kind words of welcome in your name.

The Church in Korea, as we all know, is heir to the faith of generations of lay persons who persevered in the love of Christ Jesus and the communion of the Church despite the scarcity of priests and the threat of severe persecution. Blessed Paul Yun Ji-chung and the martyrs beatified today represent an impressive chapter of this history. They bore witness to the faith not only by their sufferings and death, but by their lives of loving solidarity with one another in Christian communities marked by exemplary charity.

This precious legacy lives on in your own works of faith, charity and service. Today, as ever, the Church needs credible lay witnesses to the saving truth of the Gospel, its power to purify and transform human hearts, and its fruitfulness for building up the human family in unity, justice and peace. We know there is but one mission of the Church of God, and that every baptized Christian

has a vital part in this mission. Your gifts as lay men and women are manifold and your apostolates varied, yet all that you do is meant to advance the Church's mission by ensuring that the temporal order is permeated and perfected by Christ's Spirit and ordered to the coming of his Kingdom.

In a particular way, I wish to acknowledge the work of the many societies and associations directly engaged in outreach to the poor and those in need. As the example of the first Korean Christians shows, the fruitfulness of faith is expressed in concrete solidarity with our brothers and sisters, without any attention to their culture or social status, for in Christ "there is no Greek or Jew" (*Gal* 3:28). I am deeply grateful to those of you who by your work and witness bring the Lord's consoling presence to people living on the peripheries of our society. This activity should not be limited to charitable assistance, but must also extend to a practical concern for human growth. Not just charitable assistance, but personal development. To assist the poor is good and necessary, but it is not enough. I encourage you to multiply your efforts in the area of human promotion, so that every man and every woman can know the joy which comes from the dignity of earning their daily bread and supporting their family. This dignity is presently under threat by a cult of money which leaves many people without work... We might say: "But Father, we are making sure that they are fed". But this is not enough! The unemployed, whether men or women, must also sense the dignity which comes from providing for their household, of being breadwinners! I entrust this task to you.

I wish also to acknowledge the outstanding contribution made by Korean Catholic women to the life and mission of the Church in this country as mothers of families, as catechists and teachers, and in countless other ways. Similarly, I can only stress the importance of the witness given by Christian families. At a time of great crisis for family life – as we are all aware – our Christian communities are called to support married couples and families in fulfilling their proper mission in the life of the Church and society. The family remains the basic unit of society and the first school in which children learn the human, spiritual and moral values which enable them to be a beacon of goodness, integrity and justice in our communities.

Dear friends, whatever your particular contribution to the Church's mission, I ask you to continue to promote in your communities a more complete formation of the lay faithful through ongoing catechesis and spiritual direction. In all that you do, I ask you to work in complete harmony of mind and heart with your pastors, striving to place your own insights, talents and charisms at the service of the Church's growth in unity and missionary outreach. Your contribution is essential, for the future of the Church in Korea – as throughout Asia – will depend in large part on the development of an ecclesiological vision grounded in a spirituality of communion, participation and the sharing of gifts (cf. *Ecclesia in Asia*, 45).

Once again I express my gratitude for all that you do for the building up of the Church in Korea in holiness and zeal. May you draw constant inspiration and strength for your apostolates from the

Eucharistic sacrifice, wherein “that love of God and of humanity which is the soul of the apostolate is communicated and nourished” (*Lumen Gentium*, 33). Upon you and your families, and all who take part in the corporal and spiritual works of your parishes, associations and movements, I invoke joy and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ and the loving protection of Mary, our Mother.

I ask you, please, to pray for me. And now, together, let us all pray to the Blessed Mother, and then I will give you my blessing.

Hail Mary...[followed by the blessing]

Thank you and pray for me. Don't forget!