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On the flight to Poland: there is no war of religion – the world is at war because it has lost peace

As is customary, on the flight to Poland the Pope spoke with the journalists who accompanied him on the aircraft, more than 70 in number and from 15 countries. As their spokesman, Fr. Federico Lombardi, S.J., director of the Holy See Press Office, began by saying to the Holy Father, “All of us feel moved these days, as we know, for what is happening in the world, for what happened yesterday. We would also be grateful if, before greeting us personally, you would say a word about how you are experiencing this moment and how you are getting ready to meet the young people of the world in this situation. Thank you, Holy Father”.

“Good day and thanks for your work”, replied Pope Francis. “A word that – about what Father Lombardi was saying – is often repeated is ‘insecurity’. But the real word is ‘war’. For some time we have been saying: ‘the world is fighting a war piecemeal’. This is war. There was the war of ‘14, with its methods; then that of ‘39-‘45, another great war in the world; and now there is this one. It is not perhaps so organic; organised, yes, but organic... I say... But it is war. This holy priest, who died in the very moment when he was offering prayer for the whole Church, is one (person): but how many Christians, how many innocents, how many children... We think of Nigeria, for example. ‘But that is Africa...’ It is war. Let us not be afraid to say this truth: the world is at war, because it has lost peace”.

“Thanks so much for your work on this Youth Day. Youth always speaks to us of hope. Let us hope that the young people will say something that gives us a little more hope, in this moment. For what happened yesterday, I would like also to thank all those who offered their condolences, and in a special way the president of France, who wished to telephone me, as a brother. I thank him”.

He added, “I would like to say just one word to be clear. When I speak of war, I speak of real war, not of a war of religion, no. There is war for interests, there is war for money, there is war for the resources of nature, there is war for the domination of peoples: this is war. Someone may think: ‘He is talking about a war of religion’. No. All the religions, we want peace. Others want war. Do you understand?”.