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BIURO PRASOWE STOLICY APOSTOLSKIEJ دار الصحافة التابعة للكرسي الرسولي

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Message of the Holy Father Francis for the National Eucharistic Congress in Madagascar

The following is the Message sent by the Holy Father Francis to the president of the Episcopal Conference of Madagascar, Bishop Marie Fabien Raharilamboniaina, O.C.D., and to the participants in the Third National Eucharistic Congress in Madagascar, taking place in Antsiranana from 23 to 26 August 2024:

Message of the Holy Father

His Excellency Bishop Marie Fabien Raharilamboniaina
President of the Episcopal Conference of Madagascar

As you gather for your national Eucharistic Congress, which this year coincides with the celebration of the centenary of the “Eucharistic Youth Movement”, I join you in prayer and fraternal greetings to the bishops, priests, young people and all the faithful present.

I encourage this initiative, which aims to bring the sons and daughters of your Christian communities back to basics, by helping them to rediscover the meaning of Eucharistic adoration and the desire to spend time with Christ. It is a process that helps each of you to grow into the Christian you are called increasingly to become.

Your meeting acquires particular importance as we prepare for the closing of the Synod on synodality. May it enable you to rediscover the importance of encounter, of prayer, and of engaging with others and for others, following Jesus in the Eucharist. Once you have encountered Christ in adoration, once you have touched and received Him in the Eucharistic celebration, you can no longer keep Him for yourself, but become a missionary of His love for others. “The Eucharist… impels us to a strong and committed love of neighbour. For we cannot truly understand or live the meaning of the Eucharist if our hearts are closed to our brothers and sisters, especially those who are poor, suffering, weary or who may have gone astray in life” (*Greeting to the Organizing Committee of the National Eucharistic Congress in the United States of America*, 19 June 2023).

At a time when faith in the Lord’s real presence is a great challenge, I invite you, members of the “Eucharistic

Youth Movement” who are celebrating your centenary, to help your brothers and sisters to experience Jesus in the Eucharist. Help them also to make their own lives an offering to God, united to that of Jesus on the altar, so that he may be better known, loved and served.

May this Eucharistic Congress help each and every one of you to foster feelings of charity and solidarity towards everyone, and especially towards those in difficulty, for whom the path of life becomes more difficult every day. There are many “people who are discouraged, pessimistic and cynical about the future, as if nothing could possibly bring them happiness” (*Spes non confundit*, 9 May 2024). Bring the Lord’s hope to them, be witnesses of His compassion and merciful love.

I wish you a fruitful Congress. I entrust each one of you to the maternal protection of the Virgin Mary. May she intercede for you so that you may deepen your relationship with Christ every day. I impart to you my Blessing and I ask you, please, to continue to pray for me.

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 3 August 2024

FRANCIS