



The Holy See

JUBILEE OF ARTISTS AND THE WORLD OF CULTURE

HOLY MASS

***HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
READ BY CARDINAL JOSÉ TOLENTINO DE MENDONÇA***

*Saint Peter's Basilica
6th Sunday in Ordinary Time, 16 February 2025*

[[Multimedia](#)]

In the Gospel we have just heard, Jesus proclaims the Beatitudes to his disciples and to a large crowd of people. We have heard them so many times, and yet they never cease to amaze us: “Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh” (*Lk 6:20–21*). These words overturn our worldly mentality and invite us to look at reality with new eyes, with God’s gaze, so we can see beyond appearances and recognize beauty even amidst frailty and suffering.

The second part of the Gospel passage contains harsh and admonishing words: “But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation. Woe to you who are full now, for you will be hungry. Woe to you who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep” (*Lk 6:24–25*). The contrast between “blessed are you” and “woe to you” reminds us of the importance of discerning where we find our security.

As artists and representatives of the world of culture, you are called to be witnesses to the revolutionary vision of the Beatitudes. Your mission is not only to create beauty, but to reveal the truth, goodness and beauty hidden within the folds of history, to give voice to the voiceless, to transform pain into hope.

We live in a time of complex financial and social crises, but ours is above all a spiritual crisis, a crisis of meaning. Let us ask ourselves questions about time and about purpose. Are we pilgrims or wanderers? Does our journey have a destination, or are we directionless? Artists have the task of helping humanity not to lose its way and to keep a hopeful outlook.

Be aware, however, that hope is not easy, superficial or abstract. No! True hope is interwoven within the drama of human existence. Hope is not a convenient refuge, but a fire that burns and irradiates light, like the word of God. That is why authentic art always expresses an encounter with mystery, with the beauty that surpasses us, with the pain that challenges us, with the truth that calls us. Otherwise, “woe to us!” The Lord’s warning is stern.

As the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote, “The world is charged with the grandeur of God. It will flame out, like shining from shook foil”. The mission of the artist is to discover this hidden greatness and reveal it, making it perceptible to our eyes and hearts. The same poet also perceived “the leaden echo” and “the golden echo” in the world. Artists are sensitive to these resonances, and through their work, they engage in discernment about the various echoes of the events of this world and help others to do the same. Men and women who represent the world of culture are called upon to evaluate these echoes, to explain them to us and to show us which path they lead us down: either they are seductive songs of sirens or the authentic appeals to humanity. You are asked to provide insight in order to help distinguish between what is like “chaff scattered by the wind” and what is solid, “like trees planted by streams of water”, capable of bearing fruit (cf. *Ps* 1:3-4).

Dear artists, I see in you guardians of beauty who are willing to attend to the brokenness of our world, listen to the cry of those who are poor, suffering, wounded, imprisoned persecuted or refugees. I see in you guardians of the Beatitudes! We live in a time when new walls are being erected, when differences become a pretext for division rather than an opportunity for mutual enrichment. But you, men and women of the world of culture, are called to build bridges, to create spaces for encounter and dialogue, to enlighten minds and warm hearts.

Some might say: “But what is the use of art in our wounded world? Are there not more urgent, more practical, more pressing things to do?”. And yet, art is not a luxury, but something that the spirit needs. It is not a flight from reality, but a charge, a call to action, an appeal and a cry. Educating about true beauty is educating about hope. And hope is never separated from the drama of existence; it runs through our daily struggles, the hardships of life and the challenges of our time.

In the Gospel we have heard today, Jesus proclaims as blessed those who are poor, afflicted, meek and persecuted. It is a change of mentality, a revolution of perspective. Artists are called to take part in this revolution. The world needs prophetic artists, courageous intellectuals and creators of culture.

Let the Gospel of the Beatitudes guide you, and may your art be a herald of a new world. Let us see your poetry! Never cease searching, questioning and taking risks. True art is never easy; it offers the peace of restlessness. And do not forget that hope is not an illusion; beauty is not a utopia. Yours is not a random gift but a calling. Respond, then, with generosity, passion and love.