



The Holy See

VIDEO MESSAGE OF POPE FRANCIS ON THE OCCASION OF THE 50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF LOPPIANO INTERNATIONAL CENTRE

Dear Brothers and Sisters all residents of Loppiano, Good evening.

With you, I also greet all the people who today populate the town wished for by Chiara Lubich, inspired by the Gospel of brotherhood — that universal brotherhood — and those who from every corner of the world are linked and participate in the celebration of the first 50 years of its foundation. Loppiano is a reality that lives in service to the Church and to the world, for which we can thank the Lord; a town which is a living and effective witness of communion among peoples of various nations, cultures and vocations, which above all takes care every day to maintain mutual and never-ending charity among you.

I am pleased that you have chosen for your anniversary the day in which the entire Church celebrates St Francis of Assisi, witness and creator of peace and fraternity. It is truly a happy coincidence for me too.

The people of Loppiano, those who live there permanently and those who are there for a period of experience and formation, want to become experts in mutual acceptance and dialogue, peacemakers, builders of brotherhood.

May you continue with renewed enthusiasm on this path, I hope that you are able to remain faithful and that you may increasingly embody the prophetic design of this town which blossomed from the charism of unity exactly 50 years ago. May you live this in profound harmony with the message of the Second Vatican Council which was being celebrated then, the design, that is, to testify in mutual love for all, the light and the wisdom of the Gospel. Therefore, Loppiano is a school of life, where there is only one teacher: Jesus.

Yes, a city, a school of life in order to allow the world to hope again, to witness that the Gospel is

truly a leaven and the salt of a new civilization of love. But for this, drawing on the spiritual sap of the Gospel, it is necessary to imagine and experience a new culture in all spheres of the life of a society: from the family to politics to the economy, also known as a culture of relationships. The origin of wisdom is the sincere desire for education, the concern of education is love. It is not a coincidence that you have a site in Loppiano, where the Sophia University Institute was established by the Holy See several years ago. There is an urgent need, in fact, for young people, for men and women who, in addition to being properly prepared in the various disciplines, to be at the same time imbued with the wisdom that flows from the love of God.

Dear friends, my heartfelt wish for Loppiano and all of you is to look ahead, to always look ahead and to aim high with trust, courage and creativity. No mediocrity.

I entrust you to Mary Theotokos, Mother of God, who welcomes you all to the shrine in the heart of the town. And I ask you to pray for me.

I greet you and and bless you. *Arrivederci*.