



The Holy See

***VIDEO MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CONGRESS
SPONSORED BY THE LOS ANGELES CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE***

Friday, 18 March 2022

[[Multimedia](#)]

I joyfully greet you, who are gathered in person in California, and also those of you who are participating virtually, at the beginning of this Religious Education Congress for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

In these days, we are aware that the pandemic continues to invite us to watch over each other. The coronavirus continues to cause social separation and, sadly, the loss of life for many people, and this generates a social crisis. Our hope — we are believers — is placed in the Lord! In this time of fear and uncertainty, Our Lord continues to invite us to go ahead and proclaim our faith in his mercy, in his tenderness and in his tremendous love: “We have an anchor: by his cross we have been saved. We have a rudder: by his cross we have been redeemed. We have a hope: by his cross we have been healed and embraced so that nothing and no one can separate us from his redeeming love” ([Extraordinary Moment of Prayer in the Time of the Pandemic](#), 27 March 2020)

The theme of the Congress, “Living waters of hope”, invites us to constantly renew ourselves in the water and blood that flow from the heart of Jesus, as wellsprings of mercy for the entire world. Without this living water, our mission may be transformed into an internal and painful religiosity.... If you are a Christian, you are Church; the Church is outgoing, not inward-looking, and you must reach the existential peripheries with courage and creativity!

This year, you are celebrating a jubilee year in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, the 250th anniversary of Saint Gabriel Mission, the first Church founded by that great Apostle of Mexico and California, Saint Junipero Serra. During his canonization in 2015, I underscored that he was the embodiment of “a Church which goes forth”, [a Church] that must know how to go to the streets to share God’s tenderness and reconciliation. May this jubilee be a great opportunity for renewal!

And my prayer for you, as this Congress unfolds, is that Our Lord may fill your hearts with the living waters of his Spirit and renew your zeal as missionary disciples who always “go forward” in faith, to take his hope to the entire world, not with fine words, but with genuine acts of accompaniment, sharing with everyone the joy of knowing that we are not alone. May God, made man in Jesus, come with us through life’s journey, urging us to dream and to walk together towards the Father, transforming history and transforming ourselves.

I entrust you to Mary, Mother of the Church. I offer you my blessing, and I pray for you, but I ask you to pray for me too. Thank you.