



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS TO THE CHILDREN OF ITALIAN CATHOLIC ACTION

Consistory Hall

Thursday, 18 December 2014

[Multimedia]

Dear Children of ACR,

Welcome! I am glad to meet with you. It is an opportunity to exchange Christmas wishes. I thank you for the wishes that you addressed to me on behalf of all Italian Catholic Action, represented here by the leaders who have accompanied you. But they have stayed quiet and let you speak. This is very good, my compliments! I warmly return them to all of you, to your loved ones and to the Association.

I heard that this year you have been taking on a theme which has the slogan *Everything is to be discovered*. It's a beautiful journey that calls for courage and the hard work of searching, and then of rejoicing when the plan Jesus has for each one of you is discovered. Taking inspiration from this slogan, especially from the word "*Everything*", I would like to give you a few suggestions for the good of the journey in Catholic Action, in the family and in the community.

First. Never give up, for what Jesus intended for your journey is that *everything be built together*. together with your parents, your siblings, your friends, your school friend in catechesis, in the oratories, in the ACR.

Second. Be attentive to the needs of the poor, the suffering, the lonely, for whoever has chosen to love Jesus cannot but love his neighbour. And like this on your journey in the ACR everything will become love. I liked very much the initiative of the water pump. It's beautiful, a nice project.

Third. Love the Church, care for your priests, set yourself at the service of the community — for the Church is not just priests and bishops... but the entire community — set yourselves at the service of the community. Donate your time, energy, skills and capacities to your parishes and like

this you will bear witness to the fact that the richness of every person is a gift from God, *everything is to be shared*. It's important! This "everything": everything is to be discovered, everything to be shared, everything to be built together, everything with love....

Fourth. Be apostles of peace and serenity, beginning with your families; remind your parents, siblings, peers that it is a beautiful thing to be loved and that misunderstandings can be overcome, that together with Jesus *everything is possible*. This is important: everything is possible. But this word is not a new invention: Jesus said this word when he descended from the Mount of the Transfiguration. What did Jesus say to the father who asked him to heal his child? "Everything is possible for those who have faith". With faith in Jesus everything can be done, everything is possible.

Fifth. Talk with Jesus. Prayer: talking with Jesus, the greatest friend who never abandons us, trust Him with your joys and your sorrows. Run to Him every time you make a mistake, do something bad, with the certitude that He will forgive you. And speak to everyone about Jesus, about his love, his mercy, his tenderness, for friendship with Jesus, who gave his life for us, is an event about which *everything must be told*. All these kinds of "everything" are so important.

What do you say? Do you feel like trying to put into practice this proposal with your "everything"? I think that you are already living out some of these things. Now, with the grace of Christmas, Jesus wants to help you make a step that is even more decisive, certain, joyful in becoming his disciples. One small phrase suffices: "Here I am". We can learn this from our Mother, Our Lady, who answered thus to the call of the Lord: "Here I am". We can ask it together with a Hail Mary.

And remember well: everything is to be discovered, everything is to be built together, everything is love, everything is to be shared, everything is possible, and the faith is an event everything about which is to be told.

Thank you for your visit. Remember to pray for me, please, remember to do this.

Now, I bless you from my heart. May Almighty God bless you, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.