



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS TO PARTICIPANTS AT THE CHILDREN'S GLOBAL SUMMIT

*Paul VI Audience Hall
Saturday, 30 November 2019*

[Multimedia]

*Dear boys and girls,
dear teachers and parents!*

I greet you all and thank you for being here today at the end of your world meeting. I would particularly like to thank the president of FIDAE for her introductory words.

I like to see beauty in action in your daily work. A beauty formed by the sharing of many small gestures. I am reminded of the art of mosaics, in which many pieces are integrated to form a larger image. Seen up close, those little pieces of stone seem to have no meaning, but together they create an amazing vision.

In our Jewish and Christian tradition, beauty and goodness are linked inseparably. For example, in the book of Genesis we read that God – in creation – separates the different elements of the world, light from darkness, earth from water... He inhabits the land of plants and animals and, when everything is ready, He creates man and woman. At the end of the creation of everything we read: “God saw that it was good”; and for man and woman: “God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good” (*Gen 1: 31*).

The term “good” in Hebrew has a very broad value and can be translated not only as good but also as harmonious. It is a polyphonic harmony, made up of beauty, goodness and sharing. Creation amazes us with its splendour and variety and, at the same time, it brings us back down to earth, making us understand what our role in the world is in the face of such greatness.

When we look with amazement and admiration at the sky and the stars, or at the murmuring of a stream with its clear waters, our mind is led to contemplate the author of such beauty (cf. *Wis* 13: 3), a treasure given to mankind, who in turn must cultivate and guard it (cf. *Gen* 2: 15). In Sacred Scripture, therefore, there is a very close relationship between beauty and goodness, between beauty and goodness understood as service to others.

Just as God has made the work of His creation available to human beings, so human beings themselves find their full realization by giving life to a “shared beauty”. We are faced with a “key” of the universe, on which its survival also depends: this key is the plan of God’s covenant. It is a question of recognizing the intention that is written in the beauty of creation, that is, the Creator’s desire to communicate, to offer a wonderful message to those who can interpret it, that is, we human beings.

We must not delude ourselves “that we can substitute an irreplaceable and irretrievable beauty with something which we have created ourselves”. (Encyclical *Laudato si'*, 34). We cannot run the risk of Prometheus. Perhaps you have already heard the story of this young man who – though in good faith – wants to become almost a deity. He wants to replace God. Sometimes we too, without realizing it, fall into this temptation, when our “I” becomes the centre of everything and everyone. Instead, dear friends, this project of yours, inspired by the Encyclical *Laudato si'*, rightly says that we cannot be ourselves without the other and without the others. We must not be deceived and fall into the trap of exclusivity. You have understood that “I can” must become “we can together”. Together it is more beautiful and more effective! I can, we can, together.

Together, certainly, with teachers. A cordial greeting and thanks to all the teachers who accompany this project with their valuable work. Together we are preparing for the Global Pact on Education and for the event that will take place in Rome on 14 May 2020. We are all called to build a “global village of education”. This is a beautiful phrase: “global village of education”. What was the phrase? [everyone repeats] I can’t hear it well ... [they repeat again] Now it is good! Where its inhabitants generate a network of human relationships, which are the best antidote to all forms of discrimination, violence and bullying. In this great village, education becomes the bearer of fraternity and the creator of peace between all the peoples of the human family, and also of dialogue between their religions.

Together, of course, with parents. This is decisive for the success of your initiatives. Parents not only contribute to the final realization but, at the same time, participate in the educational project through a beautiful confrontation consisting of curiosity and novelty. We adults can also learn from young people who are at the forefront of nature conservation. Thanks to the mothers and fathers for their contribution and their patient support.

Dear boys and girls, I see in you a courageous trust. Yes, the trust and courage of a project for environmental and social improvement that is becoming real; a project that can leave its mark.

You made the right choice: you looked away from the screen of your mobile phone and rolled up your sleeves to serve the community. And you also put your mobile phones at the service of this commitment! Creativity and imagination have made your initiatives even more interesting. You have shown that artificial intelligence alone cannot provide the human warmth we all need. I still remember when, during the Youth Synod, two girls presented step by step the activities of your project.

What I am so pleased about – seeing your smiling eyes – is that you have preferred solidarity, joint work and responsibility to so many other things that the world offers you. In fact, that is it: certain things amuse you for a moment, and then that is it. Instead, this commitment together gives you a satisfaction that remains within. This is also the fruit of an educational method that involves the head, hands and heart, that is, our different dimensions, which are always connected to each other. That is why you seem happier to me than those who have everything and do not want to give anything. You are happier than those who want everything and give nothing. Only through giving can happiness be achieved (cf. *Acts 20: 35*).

Thank you! I thank you for your visit and I bless you from my heart. Thank you.

And now standing, in silence, let us pray for one another, all of us, from our hearts let us pray and ask the Lord, let us ask God to bless us all. Amen.