



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE "FRONTIER COMMUNITY"**

Clementine Hall

Saturday, 22 October 2022

[Multimedia]

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning and welcome!

I thank the Provincial Minister and I thank you, young people, for your witness. I greet the bishops and presbyters present, and in particular Fra' Giuseppe who, together with some young people, gave life to the Frontier Community.

In this community, we see the imprint of two charisms: that of *Saint Francis of Assisi* and that of *Blessed Giuseppe Puglisi*.

The Franciscan charism is ancient and known to all, which in the Church has become a large tree with many branches; and it is a very recent charism, that of the martyred priest Don Pino, who gave his life for love of his people and especially for his youngsters.

Both Francis and Don Puglisi lived the Gospel on the "*frontier*". But let us be careful: this word can become a slogan, perhaps a fashionable one. No, we do not want that. "Frontier" is the style of Jesus Christ, who, although he was God, came towards us, the lost, stray and hopeless sheep.

Frontier is *the style of Francis* who, like Jesus, stripped himself of his riches and became a beggar in order to abandon himself completely to the Providence of the Father who is in heaven, and thus share the condition of the little ones, of the last ones, of those who are a pauper of bread, but also and above all of love.

Frontier is *the style of Don Pino Puglisi*, who became a father to the young people of his parish in Brancaccio; he went out to them on the street so as to get them off the street, he educates them to serve God and their neighbour and not to serve their own interests and those of the mafia.

Frontier is not a slogan, dear brothers and sisters, it is a *style of life*. And your stories demonstrate this: yours, Francesca, Luciana and Antonella; yours, Gaetano; yours, Nicoletta; yours, Vincenzo; yours, Francesco. They are different stories, because each one of you is unique and unrepeatable. But in all of them there is a golden thread that links them and draws them together: the thread of *love that defeats evil and generates life*. Love that is welcome and listening; love that is closeness, tenderness, compassion; love that is respect, dignity and encouragement.

Dear friends, I have mentioned two inspiring charisms: that of Francis of Assisi and that of Don Pino Puglisi. But I must also say to you that the name *Città dei Ragazzi* ("City of the Young") also makes me think of another charism: that of *Don Bosco*, the Salesian charism, which drives one to dedicate oneself to children and young people so that they may become good Christians and honest citizens. It seems to me that Providence, by calling you to Mola di Bari to inspire the *Città dei Ragazzi*, wished to give this gift to you too.

And finally, I wish to underline what is in reality the most important element, the fulcrum, of your experience: at the centre there is the *Risen Christ, the Lord*. If I am not mistaken, the Risen Jesus is indeed in your logo, because he is at the centre of the life of the members of the Community. You consecrate yourselves to him to transmit his light, so that the boys and girls who are in darkness can "come into the light", reborn to a new life.

I thank you and I say to you: keep going forward, with the strength of the Lord and his Spirit. I urge you: never lose his style, the style of God: closeness, tenderness, compassion. This is God's style. In this way you will scatter the seeds of the Gospel on the true frontier of the world, which is the human heart: the true frontier. May Our Lady accompany you, and also my blessing, which I give to you and all the members of the Community from my heart. And please, I ask you to pray for me. Thank you.

Holy See Press Office Bulletin, 22 October 2022