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Message of the Holy Father on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of UNESCO

The following is the message sent by the Holy Father Francis to Her Excellency Ms. Audrey Azoulay, Director General, the text of which was read out yesterday evening by Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Parolin, on the occasion of the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the founding of UNESCO:

Message of the Holy Father

To Ms. Audrey AZOULAY

Director General of UNESCO

It is with joy that I join in the celebration of the 75th anniversary of UNESCO. It is not only an opportunity to commemorate the entry into force of the Constitution, but also and above all to reflect on the fundamental project, “to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture” (Art. 1, UNESCO Constitution).

It was natural for the Catholic Church to join this great project, because of the “organic and constitutive link that exists between religion in general and Christianity in particular, on the one hand, and culture on the other (Saint John Paul II, Address to UNESCO, No. 9, 2 June 1980). I hope that this collaboration will make it possible to develop not only the rapprochement of cultures, but also a true “culture of rapprochement”. Building bridges between people through education and culture can only be achieved by taking into account the human person in his or her entirety. The Catholic Church bears witness to the truth she has received about humanity, its origin, its nature and its destiny: she affirms that each person is not defined primarily by what he possesses, but by what she is, by the dignity God confers on him, by his capacity to exceed herself and grow in humanity. Rejoicing in the work already done, I hope that this venerable Institution will continue to promote and support an education and a culture that take into account the integral development of every person, also in their fundamental spiritual dimension. With this hope, I impart my Blessing to each one of you, to your families and to your co-workers.

From the Vatican, 11 November 2021

Francis
