



The Holy See

WORLD CYBER MEETING OF YOUNG PEOPLE, PARENTS AND TEACHERS:
WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

**VIDEO MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
TO MARK THE GLOBAL CYBER MEETING ORGANIZED BY
THE PONTIFICAL SCHOLAS OCCURRENTES**

Friday, 5 June 2020

[Multimedia]

Dear Brothers and Sisters of Scholas,

Today, after all these years in which we have shared our founding issue, it is a great joy to be able to call you a “community”. A community of friends, a community of brothers and sisters.

I still remember its origins: two teachers, two professors, in the midst of a crisis, with a little folly and a little intuition. Something unplanned, which took shape along the way.

When the crisis in that time left behind a land of violence, that education brought young people together, generating meaning and, therefore, generating beauty.

Three images of this journey come to my heart, three images that have guided three years of reflection and encounter: the fool in Fellini’s “La Strada”, Caravaggio’s “The Calling of Matthew”, and Dostoyevsky’s “The Idiot”. Meaning — the fool —, the Call — Matthew —, and Beauty.

The three stories are the story of a crisis. And thus in all three, human responsibility comes into play. Crisis originally means ‘rupture’, ‘tear’, ‘opening’ ... ‘danger’, but also ‘opportunity’.

When roots need space to continue growing, the flowerpot ends up breaking. The fact is that life is larger than our own life and therefore it breaks. But such is life! It grows, it breaks.

Poor humanity, without crises! Everything perfect, everything orderly, all neatly starched. Poor humanity. Let us imagine, such a humanity would be an unhealthy humanity, very unhealthy. Thank God this doesn't happen. It would be a numb humanity.

On the other hand, given that crisis enlivens us, calling us into the open, danger comes when we are not taught how to relate to one another with that openness. This is why crises, if they are not well supported, are dangerous, as one can become disoriented. And it is wise advice, even for small, personal, marital and social crises: "never enter a crisis alone; go in company".

There, in crisis, we are invaded by fear, we close ourselves off as individuals, or we begin to repeat what is convenient for very few, emptying ourselves of meaning, concealing one's own call, losing beauty. This is what happens when one goes through a crisis alone, without reservation. This beauty that, as Dostoevsky said, will save the world.

Scholas was born of a crisis, but it did not raise its fists to fight with the culture, nor did it lower its arms and give up, or run away crying: what a disaster, what terrible times! It came out, listening to the hearts of young people, to cultivate the new reality. "This isn't working? Let's go search elsewhere".

Scholas looks out through the cracks in the world — not with the head — with the whole body, to see if another response returns from the outside.

And this means educating. Education is listening, or it does not educate. If one does not listen, one does not educate. Education creates culture, or it does not educate. Education teaches us to celebrate, or it does not educate.

Someone might say to me, "But how, isn't education about knowing things?". No. This is knowledge. But to educate is to listen, to create culture, to celebrate.

And this is how Scholas grew. Not even these two fools — the founding fathers, we could say in jest — imagined that that educational experience in the Diocese of Buenos Aires, after 20 years would have grown as a new culture, "poetically dwelling upon the earth", as Hölderlin taught us. Listening, creating and celebrating life. This new culture poetically dwelling upon the earth.

Harmonizing the language of thought with feelings and actions. That is what you heard me say many times: the language of the head, of the heart and of the hands, synchronized. Head, heart and hands, growing harmoniously.

In Scholas I have seen Japanese teachers and students dancing with Colombians. It's impossible! I have seen it. I have seen young people of Israel playing with those of Palestine. I have seen it. Students from Haiti thinking with those from Dubai. Children from Mozambique painting with those

from Portugal.... I have seen, between East and West, an olive tree creating a culture of encounter.

Therefore, in this new crisis that humanity is facing today, where culture has been shown to have lost its vitality, I want to celebrate the fact that Scholas, as a community that educates, as an intuition that grows, opens the doors of the University of Meaning. Because to educate is to seek the meaning of things. It is to teach how to look for the meaning of things.

Uniting the dream of children and young people with the experience of adults and the elderly. This encounter must always take place; otherwise there is no humanity, because there are no roots, there is no history; there is no promise; there is no growth; there are no dreams; there is no prophecy.

Students of all situations, languages and beliefs, because no one is left out when what is taught is not just a thing, but Life. The same life that generates us and will always generate other worlds. Different worlds, unique, as we are also. In our most profound sufferings, joys, desires and nostalgia. Worlds of Gratuitousness, of Meaning, and of Beauty. "The Idiot", Caravaggio's "Calling", and the fool of "La Strada".

Never forget these last three words: gratuitousness, meaning and beauty. They may seem worthless to you, especially nowadays. Who starts a business seeking gratuitousness, meaning and beauty? It does not produce; it does not produce. Yet the whole of humanity, the future, depends upon these things that seem worthless. Move forward, take this mystique that has been given, that no one invented; and the first to be surprised were these two fools who founded it. And this is why they offer it, they give it away, because it is not theirs. It is something that came to them as a gift. Go forth sowing and reaping, with a smile, with risk, but all together and always hand in hand, to overcome any crisis.

May God bless you. And please, do not forget to pray for me. Thank you very much.

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