



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE MEETING: "EUROPEAN JESUITS IN FORMATION"

Study of the Paul VI Hall

Wednesday, 1st August 2018 [\[Multimedia\]](#)

Good morning. I am happy to welcome you. Thank you very much for this visit, it does me good. When I was a student, when we had to go to the [Superior] General, and when we had to go with the General to the Pope, we wore the cassock and cloak. I see this is no longer the fashion thank God. The priest made me laugh when he spoke about unifying the Jesuits' pastoral ministry. I understood that it was about unifying the Jesuits' souls and hearts, not their methodologies, because if this is done the Society of Jesus would come to an end. It was said that the number one role of the General was to "tend the Jesuits", and another said: "Yes, but it is like tending a flock of toads": one here, one there.... But this is beautiful, because it takes great freedom; without freedom one cannot be a Jesuit. And great obedience to the pastor; who must have the great gift of discernment in order to allow each of the "toads" to choose what he hears the Lord ask of him. This is the originality of the Society: unity with great diversity.

Blessed Paul VI told us, in the 32nd General Congregation, that where there is a crossroads of ideas, of problems, of challenges, there is a Jesuit. Read that discourse: in my opinion it is the most beautiful discourse that a Pope has given to the Society. It was a difficult moment for the Society, and Blessed Paul VI began the speech like this: "Why do you doubt? A moment of doubts? No! Have courage!". And I would like to link it to another address, not of a Pope but of a General, of Pedro Arrupe: it was his "swan's song", in the refugee camp in Thailand, I do not know whether it was in Bangkok or south of Bangkok. He gave that address ahead of [taking] the airplane and landed in Fiumicino having had a stroke. It was his last message, his testament. In these two discourses lies the framework of what the Society must do today: have courage, go to the peripheries, to the crossroads of ideas, of problems, of the mission.... There is Arrupe's testament, his "swan's song", his prayer. It takes courage to be a Jesuit. It does not mean that a Jesuit has to be irresponsible, or reckless, no. But to have courage. Courage is a grace of God,

that Pauline parrhesia.... And it takes strong knees for prayer. I think that with these two discourses you have the inspiration to go where the Holy Spirit tells you, in the heart.

Then we talk about communication, which is one of your themes. I really like the communicative method of Saint Peter Faber: yes, Faber communicated and let others communicate. Read the memorial: it is a monument to communication, both internal with the Lord, and external with the people. And I thank you for what you do. Go forth, to the crossroads, without fear. But be anchored in the Lord.

Pray for me, do not forget! This work [of the Pope] is not easy.... Perhaps this seems a heresy, but it is often fun. Thank you.

We still have a few minutes: if some of you have some questions or some reflections, let us put these minutes to use. In this way I learn from your heresies....

Thanking the Pontiff for his words, one of the participants in the meeting asked him: "The theme of our meeting is communication, young people. Someone once told me that to be religious or priests means that one thing we never have to face is unemployment. But many young people, even with a high level of preparation, risk unemployment. I find this is a challenge for me, to see things from their point of view, because I know that the Society of Jesus and the Church will always have a task for me, somewhere. I find this is a great challenge for communication: this is an experience of unemployment that I know I will never have. It is something I find difficult".

Perhaps this is one of the most serious and painful problems for young people, because it goes right to the person's heart. A person who does not have work feels he or she has no dignity. I remember once, in my land, a lady came to tell me that her daughter, an academic, spoke many languages, and could not find work. I got in touch with several lay people, and they found a job. That woman wrote me a note that said: "Thank you, Father, for helping restore my daughter's dignity". Not having work takes away one's dignity. Moreover: it is not the fact of not being able to eat, because you can go to Caritas and they feed you. The problem is not being able to bring home the bread: it takes away dignity. When I see — you see — so many young people out of work, we have to ask ourselves why. You will surely find the reason: there is a reorganization of the global economy, where the economy, which is tangible, is replaced by finance, which is abstract. Finance is at the centre and finance is cruel: it is not tangible; it is abstract. And there a collective consciousness is at play which is not tangible, but is fluid or gaseous. And this is at the core: the world of finance. Man and woman should have been in its place. Today I believe this is the great sin against the dignity of the person: displacing the person from his or her place at the centre. Last year, speaking with a manager of the International Monetary Fund, she told me that she wanted to have a dialogue involving the economy, humanism and spirituality. And she said to me: "I managed to do so. Then I got carried away and I wanted to do so among finance, humanism and spiritualism. And I was not able to do so, because the economy, even that of the

market, can be open to the social market economy, as [John Paul II](#) had asked; however, finance is incapable, because you cannot grab ahold of finance: it is 'gaseous'. Finance resembles the chain of Saint Anthony on a global scale! Thus, with this displacement of the person from the centre, and by placing at the centre something like finance, which is 'gaseous', empty gaps are created in employment.

I wanted to say this in general because therein lie the roots of the problem of unemployment posed in your question: "How can I understand, communicate with and support a young person who is in that situation of joblessness?". Brothers, it calls for creativity! In any case. Courageous creativity, in order to find the way to respond to this situation. But the question you posed is not a superficial issue. The number of youth suicides is on the rise, but governments — not all — do not publish the exact number: they publish up to a certain point, because it is scandalous. And why do these young people hang themselves, commit suicide? The main reason for all these cases is a lack of work. They are unable to feel useful and they end up.... Other young people do not feel up to facing suicide, but seek a halfway alienation, with addiction, and addiction, today, is a way of escaping this lack of dignity. Consider that behind every dose of cocaine — let us consider — there is a great global industry that makes this possible, and probably — I am not certain — the largest movement of money in the world. Other young people see interesting things on the mobile phone as a new way of life: at least they provide work.... This is real; it happens! "Ah, I'll take a flight and go to enlist in isis: at least I will have a thousand dollars in my pocket each month and something to do!". Suicide, addiction and going out toward guerilla warfare are the three options that young people have today, when there is no work. This is important: understanding the problem of young people: making [that young person] feel that I understand him, and this is communicating with him.

And then taking action to resolve this problem. The problem has a solution, but we need to find the way; prophetic words are needed; there is need for human inventiveness; many things need to be done. Get your hands dirty.... My response to your question is a little long, but they are all elements needed in taking a decision in communicating with a young person who does not have work. You did well to speak about this, because it is a question of dignity.

And what happens when a Jesuit has no work? There is a big problem! Speak quickly with your spiritual father, with your Superior; undertake a good discernment on the reason....

Thank you. I will not give you more work [speaking to the interpreter].

Tomorrow is the Feast of Saint Peter Faber: pray to him that he may give us the grace to learn to communicate.

Let us pray to Our Lady: Hail Mary....

[Blessing]

And please do not forget these two discourses: that of Blessed Paul VI, in 1974, to the 32nd general Congregation, and that of Fr Arrupe in Thailand, his swan's song, his testament.

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