



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS TO THE DELEGATION OF THE ITALIAN MOTORCYCLE FEDERATION

*Study of the Paul VI Hall
Wednesday, 5 September*

2018[\[Multimedia\]](#)

Dear friends,

I am pleased to welcome you, on behalf of the motorcyclists who will take part in the upcoming Octo Grand Prix of San Marino and Riviera di Rimini. I greet you all with affection: managers, riders and technicians, and I thank you for this visit. I especially greet the President of coni, Giovanni Malagò, and I thank him for his words.

Your presence gives me the opportunity to stress how important sport is in today's society too. The Church considers athletic activity, practiced in full respect of the rules, a valid educational tool especially for the younger generations, indeed: irreplaceable. The sports phenomenon, in fact, engenders a healthy effort to overcome self and selfishness, trains in a spirit of sacrifice and, if practiced correctly, arouses loyalty in interpersonal relationships, friendship, respect for rules.

It is important that those engaged in sport, at various levels, promote those human and Christian values which are the basis of a more just and supportive society. This is possible because sporting events are expressed in universal language, which transcends borders, languages, races, religions and ideologies. This is seen especially when the sport is non-professional, which comes from the heart. Therefore, it has the intrinsic capacity to bring people together, encouraging dialogue and acceptance.

I encourage you to spread the values of sport: in this way you will contribute to building a more just and supportive society. And I'd like to pause on two words that the president said. One is "passion": when I read the news about suicide among young people — and there are so many —, [I wonder] what went wrong there? All I can say is that in that life there was a lack of "passion"; someone did not know how to sow the passion for life. And then the difficulties were not met with

this passion. Let passion infect you: this world needs passions, enthusiasm. Living *with passion*, and not like those who bear life as a burden. Passion is to go forward. And the second expression is: “life champion”. Yes, one can become champion in an athletic victory, team champion, whatever it may be.... But a “life champion” is someone who lives life with passion. One who lives fully is able to live like this. “Passion” and “life champion”: two beautiful expressions.

With these wishes, as I assure you and your families of my remembrance in prayer, I gladly invoke the Lord’s Blessing upon you.