



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE "PAPAL FOUNDATION"**

Consistory Hall

Friday, 21 April 2023

[\[Multimedia\]](#)

*Your Eminences,
Your Excellencies,*

I am pleased to greet you, the Members, Trustees and Stewards of The Papal Foundation, and I extend my prayerful best wishes for your time in the See of Peter, who was called by the Lord at the Last Supper, in the presence of the others, to strengthen his brothers and serve as the visible sign of unity for the Church (cf. *Lk* 22:31-32). This public entrustment of responsibility, which has been passed on to his successors, is shared in varying degrees by all those who directly or indirectly assist the Pope in fulfilling his mission. By bearing the name “Papal” – *The Papal Foundation* – dear brothers and sisters, your foundation is certainly counted among this number.

In light of the *responsibility for unity* entrusted to Peter and his successors, I would like to highlight two aspects of your cooperation in the mission of the Pope. The first is *fostering unity*. Sadly, we see more and more in our own day how the unity of the Church is wounded by division. And the devil is a specialist in fighting against unity; he is a specialist! This is often caused by the influence of ideologies and movements that while at times well intentioned, end up fomenting parties and criticism, with each one developing a certain superiority complex when it comes to insight into the authentic practice of the faith. This is further compounded by the application of secular terminology, especially from the political realm, when speaking of the Church and the faith itself. Saint Paul warned the early Church about these instruments of division that speak superficially or reject outright the nature of the Church as *unity in diversity*, as unity without uniformity (cf. *1 Cor* 3: 1-9; *Rom* 16: 17-18). It is the Holy Spirit who brings about this unity without uniformity; he alone is

able to do so.

Motivated by sincere faith and an authentic desire to help others, the members of the Papal Foundation rise above these partisan divisions and foster unity through the generous funding each year of numerous projects and scholarships that provide vital assistance, without prejudice or discrimination, to our brothers and sisters throughout the world. Here one thinks of the words of Saint Paul to the Church in Galatia: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (3:28). With gratitude for your witness in this regard, I also encourage you to persevere in this important role of fostering the unity of the Universal Church.

The second aspect, which also calls to mind the public entrustment of responsibility to Peter and his successors for the unity of the Church, is *transparency*. Unity and transparency. As you are aware, the Holy See has been making strides in these past years to guarantee that the services provided to the Universal Church and to society in general by its various Dicasteries, Institutions and Offices is carried out with appropriate transparency. This is especially important in its service of charity, which relies on the good will and generosity of so many people around the world. While not comparable to the immense harm resulting from the failure to protect the most vulnerable from various forms of abuse, financial scandals caused by a lack of oversight and transparency also damage the good name of the Church and can call into question the credibility of the faith itself, even if such thinking is always misguided. In this regard, I thank and commend the Papal Foundation for its ongoing commitment to maintain appropriate measures of transparency so that the funding of scholarships and projects truly benefits those in need and contributes to the building up of the Kingdom of God on earth. Nothing is left behind or in pockets.

With these sentiments, I express my gratitude once again for all your efforts to foster unity and transparency and I pray that you will be renewed in your zeal to assist the charitable work of the Bishop of the See of Rome, which presides in love over the entire Church (cf. Ignatius of Antioch, *Letter to the Romans, Proem.*). Thank you, thank you very much! I know that you do this work with joy, with gladness. Never lose your *sense of humour*, never; press forward with this, which is very important. Entrusting you, your families and all those associated with your mission to the loving intercession of Mary, Mother of the Church, I cordially impart my Blessing as a pledge of joy and peace in Christ our Risen Saviour. And I ask you, please, to remember to pray for me. Thank you!