



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS TO THE EUCHARISTIC YOUTH MOVEMENT (MEG)

*Paul VI Audience Hall
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[Multimedia]

Thank you very much for your questions.

There are two words, at the beginning of the questions, which struck me, and they are words that one lives in everyday life, both in society and in the family. The words are “tension” and “conflict”. Magat Diop spoke of “tension” in family relationships, and Gregorius Hanzel talked about “conflicts”. Conflict. Let us think, what would a society, a family, a group of friends be like without tension and conflict? Do you know what it would be? A cemetery. Because only in dead things are there no tensions and no conflicts. When there is life, there is tension and there is conflict. For this reason it is necessary to develop this concept and look for what the real tensions are in my life, how they arise, because it is tension that says I am alive; and what these conflicts are like. Only in Paradise will there be none! We will all be united in peace with Jesus Christ. And each one must identify the tension in his or her own life. Tension makes one grow, it develops courage. A young person must have this virtue of courage. A youth without courage, is a young person who is “watered down” and is an aged youth. Sometimes I have a mind to say to young people: “Please, do not retire!”. Because there are young people who retire at the age of 20. Everything is secure in life, everything is calm no “tension”.

It is clear that there is tension in the family. How does one resolve tension? With dialogue. When there is dialogue in a family, when there is the capacity to spontaneously speak one’s mind, tensions can be resolved very well.

Aim high, aim high.... You must not be afraid of tension. But you must also be careful, because if you like tension for the sake of tension, this will do you harm and you will be an argumentative, negative young person, someone who likes creating tension. No, not this way. Tension can help us take a step towards harmony, but a harmony which leads to another more harmonious type of

tension.

To clarify this better: first, do not be afraid of tensions, because they make us grow; second, resolve tensions through dialogue, because dialogue unites, whether in the family or in a group of friends, and the path will be found to go on together, without losing one's own identity; third, do not be too attached to tension because it will harm you. Is that clear? Tension makes us grow, tension is resolved through dialogue, and be careful not to be too attached to tension, because in the end it is destructive. I have said that a young person without tension is a "retired" young person, a "dead" young person; but that young person who only lives in tension is a sick young person. This has to be made clear.

Gregorius spoke of conflicts: conflict in a society such as in Indonesia, where one breathes a great internal diversity of cultures. Social conflict. Conflicts can also do us good, for they make us understand differences, and make us understand that if we do not find a way to resolve this conflict, there will be a situation of war. Conflict, in order to be addressed properly, must be directed toward unity, and in a society such as yours [turning to the youth who asked the question], which is made up of so many different cultures, must seek unity but with respect for each person's identity. Conflict is resolved with respect for each person's identity. When we watch tv or read the newspapers, we see conflicts that fail to be resolved, and result in war: one culture does not tolerate the other. Let us think about our Rohingya brothers and sisters: they were chased out of one country and another and another, and have taken to the sea.... When they reach a port or a beach, they are given some water or something to eat and pushed out to sea. This is an unresolved conflict, and this is war, this is called violence, it's called killing. It is true: if I am in conflict with you and I kill you, the conflict is over. But this is not the way. If many identities — be they cultural, religious — live together in one country, there will be conflicts. Only with respect for the person's identity will the conflict be resolved. Tensions — in the family, among friends — I said that dialogue is necessary to resolve them; true social conflicts, cultural too, are resolved through dialogue, but first with respect for the other person's identity. In the Middle East too, we see that very many people are not respected: not only religious minorities, Christians, are not respected: they are often killed, persecuted. Why? Because their identity is not respected. In our history, there have always been conflicts over religious identity, for example, which resulted from lack of respect for the other person's identity. "But this one is not Catholic, he doesn't believe in Jesus Christ..." — "Respect him. Look for his good qualities. Look in his religion, in his culture, for the values that he has. Respect". This is how conflicts are resolved with respect for the identity of others. Tensions — conflicts involve tension — can be resolved with dialogue. This is how I would respond to your question, regarding Indonesia.

The Pelé fan [a Brazilian girl] asked this question: what has been the greatest challenge or difficulty that Pope Francis has faced in his mission as a religious? I would say: always seeking peace in the Lord, that peace which Jesus alone can give you. At work, in tasks, the challenge is to find that peace which means that the Lord accompanies you, that the Lord is close. And there is

also another challenge: to know how to distinguish the peace of Jesus from another kind of peace which is not of Jesus. Do you understand? This is something that you must learn well, and ask the Lord for the grace to know how to discern true peace from false peace. To discern. This is a challenge. And true peace always comes from Jesus. Sometimes it comes “wrapped” in a cross. But it is Jesus who gives you peace in that trial. It does not always come as a cross, but true peace always comes from Jesus. Instead, the other kind of peace, the superficial kind, that peace which makes you happy, it contents you a little but it is superficial, it comes from the enemy, from the devil, and it makes you happy: “I’m content, I’m not worried about this, I’m at peace...”. But inside, it contains deceit! Here it is necessary to ask for this grace, to know how to distinguish, to know how to recognize which is the peace of Jesus and which is the peace that comes from the enemy, which destroys you. The enemy always destroys: he makes you believe that this is the way and then, in the end, he leaves you on your own. Because remember this: the devil is a poor payer, he never pays well! He always cheats, he’s a swindler! He shows you things dressed up, and you believe that thing is good, that it will give you peace; you go there and in the end you don’t find happiness. To always seek the peace of Jesus: this is a challenge, a challenge which I have had, which I have and which all of you have. What is the sign of Jesus’ peace? How do I know that this peace is given by Jesus? The sign is joy, that profound joy. The devil never gives you joy. He gives you a little entertainment, a “pantomime”, makes you happy for a moment, but he never gives you that joy. That joy Jesus alone can give, by giving you the Holy Spirit. The challenge for all of us — mine too — is always to seek the peace of Jesus; even in dark times, but the peace of Jesus. And to know how to distinguish it from that other false kind of peace, which in the end is dishonest: it ends badly and does not reward you properly. Jesus is a good payer, he pays well: he pays very well!

Pin-Ju Lu asked me whether I see real signs of joy in the Church, in the world in this 21st century. The signs are there: this is one! [Pointing to the young people present in the Hall]. This is a sign of hope, seeing young people like you who believe that Jesus is in the Eucharist, who believe that love is stronger than hate, that peace is stronger than war, that respect is stronger than conflict, that harmony is stronger than tension.... This is hope, this gives me joy! This gives hope, because Pin-Ju Lu’s question was: “What has been the greatest moment of joy since you became Pope?”, and then the signs of hope or positive signs in this world where so many wars are being waged. We are at war: I repeat so often that this is the third world war, piecemeal. We are at war. And this is negative. But there are signs of hope and there are signs of joy.

I would like to go back to Magat Diop’s expression, at the beginning, to a phrase from which I took the word “tension”: the family. “Powerful tensions and struggles between two generations”. I would ask: which are the two generations? Tell me: which are they? I ask because I see that you are all silent. Those of the parents and children? Are these the two generations? Yes, tension between mom and dad and me: the fact that I want something because I think life is like this, and they think in a different way.... But there is another generation. Why haven’t you spoken of grandparents? Here, I will tell you one thing — but it is not to reprimand you — grandparents are the great

forgotten ones of this time. Now a bit less, here in Italy, because since there is no work and they have a pension, you see, grandparents are remembered! But grandparents are the great forgotten ones. Grandparents are the memory of a family, the memory of a country, the memory of the faith, because it is they who give it to us. Grandparents. I ask you this question: Do you speak with your grandparents? [They answer: "Yes!"] Do you ask you grandparents: "Grandpa, grandma, what was this like? How do you do this? What did you used to do?". Ask them, ask them! Because grandparents are a font of wisdom, because they have the memory of life, the memory of the faith, the memory of tensions, they remember conflicts.... And the grandparents are good! I really like talking with grandparents. I'll tell you an anecdote. The other day, in the Square, during a Wednesday Audience, I was going round in the popemobile, and I saw an elderly grandma there: you could see she was elderly! But her eyes were shining with joy. I had them stop the popemobile and I got down, and I went to greet her. And she was smiling. "Tell me, grandma: how old are you?" — "92!" — "Ah, well done, good! Joyful! But tell me the recipe to reach 92 like this". And she said to me: "You know, I eat ravioli!". And then she added: "And I make them myself!". This is an anecdote to tell you that meeting grandparents is always a surprise. Grandparents always surprise us: they know how to listen to us, they have great patience!... We are talking about three generations, at least three. Also when grandparents live at home, they help so much to resolve the usual tensions in a family. Do not forget your grandparents. Understood?

Louise: In the Gospel Jesus tells us: "You are my friends if you do as I command you". But in this relationship of friendship must we also expect the manifestation of his presence in exchange?

Friendship always takes two: I am your friend and you are my friend. Jesus always manifests himself — I have talked about this — in his peace. If you approach Jesus he gives you peace, he gives you joy. When you meet Jesus, in prayer, in a good work, in a work of helping another — there are many ways to find Jesus — you will feel peace and also joy. This is the manifestation, Louise. It's like this. Jesus manifests himself in this exchange. But you must seek him both in prayer, and in the Eucharist, in everyday life, in the responsibility of your tasks and even in going to seek the most needy and help them: Jesus is there! He will let you feel him. Sometimes you will feel what is only found in the encounter with Jesus: astonishment. Astonishment at meeting Jesus. Meet Jesus: do not forget this word, please. Meet Jesus!

Let us think of that day (cf. Jn 1:35-42): it is about ten o'clock in the morning, Jesus is passing by and John and Andrew are with John the Baptist; they are talking there, about many things. John the Baptist says: "It is he, that One, the Lamb of God. It is he". And intrigued, they follow Jesus, seeking him. It is curiosity.... Jesus acts as if nothing has happened, and turns to them and says: "What do you seek?" — "Where are you staying?" — "Come"! (vv. 38-39). And they stayed — the Gospel says — with Jesus the whole day. But what happened later? Andrew went to his brother Simon: he was filled with joy, great joy; he was filled with astonishment at having met Jesus. And he said: "We have found the Messiah"! (v. 41). And John did the same with James. It's like this. The encounter with Jesus gives you this astonishment. It is his presence. Then it passes, but it

leaves you peace and joy. Never forget this: astonishment, peace, joy. Jesus is there. This is the exchange.

Now “Maradona” [an Argentine youth]. Pope Francis, what would you say to young people so that they might discover the profoundness of the Eucharist?

It always helps to think of the Last Supper. The words that Jesus said when he gave the bread and the wine, his Body and his Blood: “Do this in memory of me”. The memory of Jesus present there; the memory of Jesus who, in every Mass, is there, and saves us there! The memory of that gesture of Jesus, who afterwards went to the Garden of Olives to begin his Passion. The memory of a love so great that he gave his life for me! Each one of us can say this.

The grace of memory, of which I spoke when I was speaking about grandparents. The grace of memory: the memory of what Jesus did. It is not merely a ritual, it is not a ceremony. There are beautiful ceremonies, military ceremonies, cultural... no, no. It is something else: it is going there, to Calvary, where Jesus gave his life for me. Each one must say this. With this memory, seeing Jesus, receiving the Body and Blood of Jesus, you deepen the mystery of the Eucharist. “Well, Father, when I go to Mass, I get bored...”. Because it isn’t a ritual. If you want to deepen the mystery of the Eucharist, remember. This verb is beautiful, because Paul says it to one of his favourite disciples — I don’t remember whether to Titus or Timothy, but to one of the two, who were two bishops whom he had made bishops. Remember Jesus Christ (cf. 2 Tm 2:8). Remember Jesus Christ. When I am at Mass, there, as he is giving his life for me. This is how to deepen the Mystery. Then, when you do not go to Mass, but you go to pray before the Tabernacle, remember that He is there, and that he gave his life for you. Memory. It was the commandment that Jesus gave to his own: “Do this in memory of me”. In other words every time that you perform this celebration, remember me; each time that you go to pray before the Tabernacle, remember this. And do not forget what St Paul said to his disciples, bishops as well: Remember Jesus Christ.

Like this let us close our dialogue today. I thank you. I had the questions written down, but I had not read them. What I said came from the heart, as it came at that moment.

Think of these words: tension-dialogue; conflict-respect-dialogue; exchange of the presence of Jesus-friendship with Jesus: peace and joy; meeting with Jesus: astonishment, joy, peace; to deepen the Eucharist: the memory of what Jesus did. And thus you will go forward. The world has so many bad things, we are at war; but there are also many beautiful things and many good things, and many saints hidden among the People of God. God is present. God is present and there are so many, many reasons for hope to go forward. Have courage and go forward!

Before imparting the blessing, let us ask Our Lady for help, because when children begin to walk they look for their mother’s hand so as not to lose their way. We must go on the path of life holding our mother’s hand. Let us pray to Our Lady, each one in his own language.

[Hail Mary and blessing]

And please, please, I ask you: do not forget to pray for me.

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