

Rimini, August 19th 2018 - After the message of the President of the Republic Sergio Mattarella, here is the message from Pope Francis. Four pages signed by Vatican secretary of state cardinal Pietro Parolin, which is a lecture on this year's meeting's title "The forces that move history are the same that make man happy". The message was read by the president of the Meeting foundation Emilia Guarnieri before the Mass at 11:30 am which was celebrated by the bishop of Rimini Francesco Lambiasi in the Intesa Sanpaolo A3 Auditorium of the Rimini Fair

Reverend Excellence,

also this year the Holy Father Francis wishes to send, through you, a cordial greeting to the organizers, volunteers and to the participants in the XXXIX Meeting for friendship among peoples, a greeting to which I join my personal best wishes for the event's success .

The title of the Meeting - "The forces that move history are the same ones that make the man happy" – a quote from Don Giussani and refers to a crucial turning point in the society around the Sixty-eight, while its effects are still present after 50 years. "today we do not live an era of change but in a change of era" pope Francis states(speech at the 5th National Conference of the Italian Church, Florence, 10 November 2015).

The break with the past became the categorical imperative of a generation that put its hopes in a structural revolution which is capable of ensuring greater authenticity of life. Many believers yielded to this new perspective

Many believers followed this new perspective and chose moralism as their faith which, took grace for granted, relied on the efforts of practical realization of a better world.

For this reason it is significant that, in that context, "The forces that move history are the same that make man happy" (Life by Fr Giussani, BUR 2014, page 412) to a young man who was looking for "forces that dominate history", Don Giussani said: With these words he challenged himself to verify the forces that change history, raising the bar to measure his revolutionary attempt.

What happened to this attempt? What was left of that desire to change everything? This is not the place for a historic budget, but we can find some evidence that emerge from the current situation in the West. We return to building walls instead of bridges. We tend to be closed, rather than open to the other different from us. Indifference grows, rather than the desire to take initiative for change. A sense of fear prevails over trust for the future. And we wonder if in this half century the world has become more habitable.

What did we go through in the season 68 , and what are we called and reflect now together with many other protagonists, and to ask ourselves: what have we learned? What can we cherish?

Man has always wanted to think that his intelligence and abilities govern the world ,a claim that is known in two ways: "One is the fascination of Gnosticism, [...] where the subject ultimately remains closed in the immanence of his own reason or his feelings. The other is neopelagianism [...] of those who ultimately rely solely on their own strength "(Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium, 94).

But then, does the Christian who wants to avoid these two temptations necessarily have to give up the desire for change? No, it is not a matter of withdrawing from the world in order not to risk making mistakes and to preserve a sort of pristine purity, because "authentic faith [...] always implies a profound desire to change the world" (ibid., 183), to move the story, as the title of the Meeting states.

Many will wonder: is it possible? The Christian cannot give up dreaming that the world will change for the better. It is very fair to have this dream because the Christianity has its roots in the beginning of a new world which Pope Francis summarizes with these words: "His resurrection is not a thing of the past; it contains a life force that has penetrated the world. Where it seems that everything is dead, the buds of the resurrection come back to every part. It is a force without equal. [...] In the midst of the darkness, something new always begins to blossom "(ibid., 276).

We have seen this "life force" at work in many occasions throughout history. How can we not remember that another period change that marked the world? The Holy Father spoke to the European episcopate last year: "In the sunset of ancient civilization, while the glories of Rome became those ruins that we can still admire in the city; while new people were passing the borders of the ancient Empire, a young man echoed the voice of the Psalmist: "Who is the man who wants life and desires to be happy?". In proposing this question in the Prologue of the Rule, St. Benedict [...] does not care about social conditions, neither about the wealth nor the power. He calls for to the common nature of every human being , who no matter what always yearns for life and happiness" (speech on Europe, 28 October 2017).

Today who saves this desire in the man's heart? Only God lives up to its infinite thirst. In fact, if desire does not find an adequate object, it remains still and nothing , no promise, no initiative will be able to move it. From this point of view, "it is perfectly conceivable that the modern age, begun with such an exceptional and promising flow of human activity, ends in the most deadly and most sterile passivity that history has ever known" (H. Arendt, *Life active The human condition*, Milan 1994, 239-240).

No effort, no revolution can satisfy the human heart. Only God, who made us with an infinite desire, can fill him with his infinite presence; so he became man: so men may meet the one who can make our wishes for happiness come true, as recalled by a passage from the Document of Aparecida (29 June 2007), fruit of the V Conference of the episcopate of the Latin American continent and of the Caribbean. The Holy Father, thanked for the exhibition dedicated to the great Marian Shrine of Aparecida, offers this step as a contribution to deepen the theme of this edition of the meeting: "The event of Christ is [...] the beginning of this new subject that born in history [...]: "At the beginning of being a Christian there is not an ethical decision or a great idea, but the decisive direction is meeting with a Person, which gives life a new horizon "(Deus caritas est, 1). [...] The very nature of Christianity consists ,recognizing the presence of Jesus and following him. This is the beautiful experience of those early disciples who, were fascinated and full of amazement when they met Jesus, before the extraordinary figure of those who spoke to them, the way he treated them , he gave them answers to the hunger and thirst for life in their hearts. John the Evangelist with vivid strength told us about the impact of the first two disciples , Joh and Andrew. It all began with the question : " what are you looking for?" (John 1:38) This was followed by an invitation to live an experience: "Come and see" (John 1:39). This narration will remain in history as a unique synthesis of the Christian method "(Doc. Di Aparecida, 243-244).

The Holy Father wishes that this year's Meeting for all those who participate would be an opportunity to deepen or to accept the invitation of the Lord Jesus: "Come and see". And this is the force that, while freeing man from the slavery of "false infinities", who promise happiness without assuring it , makes him a new protagonist on the scene of the world, called to make history the place where the children of God meet their Father and of the brothers among them.

While assuring that you live up to this exciting challenge, Pope Francis asks to pray for him and for the World Meeting of Families that will take place in Dublin on the 25th and 26th of August current.

With my prayers and wished , I avail myself of the fact to confirm myself with a distinct respect

Card. PIETRO PAROLIN Secretary of State

From the Vatican, 9 August 2018