

***The Church must smell like the world it penetrates:
Gaudium et Spes at 50***

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Keynote Address**

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Dear Brothers in Christ,

Thank you for the invitation to address your annual conference. You have invited me to reflect on one of the most important documents of the Second Vatican Council – *Gaudium et Spes, the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* as it nears its “golden jubilee” this December. In an attempt to diminish or dismiss the great significance of this core document of the Council, many have tried to classify Vatican II as a “pastoral council” that did not address dogmatic issues. At the beginning of this presentation, let me offer this fundamental principle: the Second Vatican Council offered a new model of merging between so-called pastoral and doctrinal councils. The standard refrain that Vatican II was a pastoral council and therefore did not propose new doctrines of the church is incorrect. Vatican II was a pastoral council by its teachings, i.e., its doctrines. The Council was therefore pastoral by being doctrinal.

Fifty years after its promulgation, who of us cannot still be moved by the opening words of that landmark conciliar document?

The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts. For theirs is a community composed of men. United in Christ, they are led by the Holy Spirit in their journey to the Kingdom of their Father and they have welcomed the news of salvation which is meant for every man. That is why this community realizes that it is truly linked with mankind and its history by the deepest of bonds.

There is an interesting history to the birth of this Pastoral Constitution. Such a document was not planned from the outset of the Council. It was toward the close of the first session of the Council, on December 4, 1962, that Belgian Cardinal Leo Suenens spoke of the need for the Church to address the world and not just to be occupied with internal Church matters. The very next day, Cardinal Giovanni Battista Montini of Milan (who was to become Paul VI by the next session) seconded Suenens' proposal. And then, on December 6, Cardinal Lercaro of Bologna echoed the views of Montini and Suenens. So, thanks to the support of three of the most influential and respected Council fathers, a statement on church and world became a topic for the next session of the Council!

The final result was the longest document of the Council, indeed the longest document ever produced by any of the 21 ecumenical Councils in a 2,000 year history: ***Gaudium et Spes, the Pastoral Constitution on The Church in the Modern World.***

The document is divided into two parts. The first part lays out theological and pastoral perspectives and principles about the Church in the world. The second part addresses five areas of what it calls "special urgency."

Once the basic anthropology of Christian humanism is presented in chapters one through three, the fourth chapter moves to a reflection on how the mission of the Church must be redefined. This method of re-conceptualizing the mission of the Church is already hinted at in the oft-quoted paragraph four of the introduction to the Constitution: "*To carry out such a task, the Church has always had the duty of scrutinizing the signs of the times and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel. . . . We must therefore recognize and understand the world in which we live, its expectations, its longings, its often dramatic characteristics.*"

The Fathers of the Second Vatican Council were men who had experienced two world wars, the horror of the Holocaust, the onset of the nuclear weaponry, the hostility of communism, the awesome and only partially understood impact of science and technology all these elements of their lived experience forced them to a non-internal definition of the Church. The Church had to be understood in its relationship to the world they knew. The message of the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World is in many ways the hope that the Council wished to offer the world.

The Pastoral Constitution encouraged a new model of church/world engagement. Previous models were no longer adequate: the minority sect within the Roman empire, the alliance of Church and Constantinian state, the medieval institution of Christendom, the battered and battering Church of post-Reformation Europe, the established Church of the ancien regime, and the isolated and triumphalistic Church of the 19th century.

Gaudium et Spes suggested a Church with a new strategy for the Church's presence in the world, one which emphasized neither withdrawal, triumphalism, nor assimilation, but critical conversation (listening and speaking) along with principled cooperation with other social institutions and communities of people. The mission of the Church needed to be expressed in social categories and had, therefore, to take seriously the realities of secularization and pluralism.

In the two thousand year history of the Church, it had never happened that an ecumenical Council would focus with such profound pastoral involvement on the temporal events of humanity. The Council Fathers confronted theologically the fundamental questions that have always plagued the human heart: "What is man? What is the meaning of suffering, of evil, of death, that notwithstanding any kind of progress, continue to exist?" (GS, 10). Sounding out the "mystery of man" by the light of the Word of God, the Council Fathers also strongly committed the Christian community, which was called to offer a specific contribution to "render more human the entire family of men" (GS, 40).

One of the great gifts of *Gaudium et Spes* was its appeal for the personal witness and "illuminating" initiatives of lay people- encouraging them to assume greater roles in

the life of the Church and the world. (cf. GS, 43). This still remains one of the great urgencies and hopes of the Church of our times.

Above all, *Gaudium et Spes* presents Jesus Christ as the Light of the world, the "lumen gentium" who illuminates the mystery of man, not only for Christians, but also for the entire human family; he reveals man to himself; he calls everyone to the same identical destiny, and, through the Holy Spirit, "offers to everyone the possibility to come into contact" with his definitive victory over death (GS, 22). We could sum up the entire document with these five points:

- 1. *The Church works to build a world that acknowledges and promotes the dignity, life and freedom of each human person.***
- 2. *The Church works to create conditions of justice and peace in which individuals and communities and can truly flourish.***
- 3. *The Church is present in the activity of the international community.***
- 4. *The Church's universal religious mission does not allow her to be identified with any particular political, economic or social system.***
- 5. *The Church contributes to the establishment and consolidation of peace within the human community in accordance with God's law, a peace that is the fruit of the work of true justice.***

When *Gaudium et Spes* was promulgated, many Catholics wondered why the church wanted to engage the world and whether the church had any business being concerned with political and economic issues and peacemaking. The council's intention was to come in contact with people of all walks of life as sign of respect for their dignity. The council was very clear that it presents this teaching for no other reason than to evangelize. This means to share the good news. It is not so much to present a parallel government, a parallel economic system. It presents valuable insight coming from revelation and presents modest contribution to humanity as it searches for a better life, a better world.

When the Church commits herself to works of justice on a human level (and there are few institutions in the world which accomplish what the Catholic Church accomplishes for the poor and disadvantaged), the world praises the Church. But when the Church's work for justice touches on issues and problems which the world no longer sees as bound up with human dignity, like protecting the right to life of every human being from conception to natural death, or when the Church confesses that justice also includes our responsibilities toward God himself, then the world often rejects our message.

The work of *Gaudium et Spes* is not over. I believe that only now is the message of the Second Vatican Council being so fully and vividly realized: we are a global church

and we are responsible for our brothers and sisters throughout the world. We need further integration of social mission into the centre of Catholic life. We need to insist that social ministry is an integral part of the life and mission of the Church. We need to strengthen our sense of mission. We can no longer speak of "social justice" as an option or an alternative. Our incorporation and implementation of the social teaching of the church must become normative and constitutive.

Gaudium et Spes at 50

Today we re-read the words of *Gaudium et Spes* in a world scenario decisively changed. How many changes - political, social, cultural - have taken place since December 7, 1965! The cold war is over, science and technology have made unprecedented progress: from space exploration and the landing on the moon, from heart transplants to genetic engineering, from cybernetics to robotics, from telecommunications to the most advanced technologies. Think of the factors of change connected to urbanization and industrialization and the incredible growth and power of the mass media. The world has changed incredibly since 1965!

Gaudium et Spes also addressed the challenge of contemporary atheism (cf. GS, 19-21). The Council confronts it with its typical dialogic style, trying to distinguish the different expressions of this complex phenomena, but above all stressing the reasons which are in its origin (GS, 19).

Gaudium et Spes dealt with the dignity of the human person, the community of men and women, and human activity in the universe. Christ is the meaning and fullness of every creature, the alpha and omega of the world.

Gaudium et Spes spoke of the necessity to promote the dignity and holiness of marriage and the life of the family. The family is today at risk, not only by external factors of social mobility and the new characteristics of human labor. There are also the serious problems stemming from our individualistic culture that lacks a strong ethical anchor. It is a culture that confuses the true meaning of love between spouses and the gift of family life.

Should we not be asking if the changes happening in our times have been and are for the good of humanity? (cf. GS, 6). In particular, can you have "a more perfect temporal order, without it going hand in hand with spiritual growth?" (GS, 4). It is still necessary to go back and reflect on the analysis and indications offered by *Gaudium et Spes*, to verify its value and to grasp its knowledge.

The problem of poverty and of overcoming it through a healthy economy, respectful of the primary value of the person, allows for a vast discussion on political ethics in *Gaudium et Spes*. The appeal of the Council to eliminate the destructive fury of war and promote peace is ever still true.

The horizons of *Gaudium et Spes* are so vast. With this important document the Church really wanted to embrace the world. Looking at human beings in the light of Christ, the Church knew how to establish profound links and outline concrete needs. There resulted a kind of "magna carta" of human dignity to defend and promote.

As the Second Vatican Council stated, the Church's universal religious mission does not allow her to be identified with any particular political, economic or social system, yet at the same time, this mission serves as a source of commitment, direction and strength which can contribute to establishing and consolidating the human community in accordance with God's law."

What makes *Gaudium et Spes* genuinely significant is the way it defined the Church: not as an institution established in the past and still conducting a self-maintenance operation, but in terms of its task in the world. Moreover, along with *Lumen Gentium*, the Church of *Gaudium et Spes* is reaching towards eschatological goals, reaching towards a fullness of community life under God, a fullness of justice and peace, a sharing of resources, a building of relationships.

With *Gaudium et Spes*, social concerns are presented as the essence of being a disciple of Jesus. To be a member of the Church is to be a member of the community of the resurrection that is supposed to have a transforming impact in the world. *Gaudium et Spes* was extraordinary as a document because it gave a coherent picture of Catholic social teaching. But it goes even further than that. It gives a new and coherent picture of what is essential to being a Christian, what is essential to being Church in the world.

Gaudium et Spes suggested an ecclesial strategy for how the Church might engage the world with an attitude of respect and reverence for the activity of the Spirit working through the many events, institutions, and communities of our world.

Challenges of Gaudium et Spes

1) We need renewed attention and further development of lay leadership and responsibility: understanding that justice is pursued more often by believers' activities in their families, in their work, and in their citizenship, than in Church committees and Church commissions. *Gaudium et Spes* was not an invitation to new forms of clericalism but rather new ways of giving Christian witness to the world around us.

2) We need to preach St. John Paul II's message on the gospel of life in our land and our world of far too many abortions and executions, in our world of too much terrorism, in our society with too much family violence, in our society marred by the slow-motion violence of poverty.

3) We need to recover a stronger sense of mission. The discussion of orthodoxy and identity are important; but Church does not exist for itself, but to preach the gospel, to serve the least of these, and to build the kingdom.

4) The central message of *Gaudium et Spes* focuses on the social vocation of the Church. Now is not the time to turn inward, preoccupied by our institutional difficulties and internal disputes. Rather, now is the time to build bridges across the lines of race, gender, nation, and economics, and to renew the earth.

Openness to the world means getting ourselves dirty, stained, wounded by the existential realities that the poor face. **The church should smell like the world that it penetrates.** Many people want to witness to Christ in some idealized past that they long for with nostalgia. No, we witness to Christ now, here, where we are in our world. Part of the church's openness to humanity is to remind the rest of the world of human beings that have been forgotten. Fifty years after the Council, *Gaudium et Spes* still shows us the way and still offers us principles, which can help "the Church" really be "The Church in the Modern World."

The heart of Catholic Social Teaching

The Social Teaching of the Church is neither "left" nor "right", neither "liberal" nor "conservative" – within the contemporary politicized use of those words. "Social justice" is the way that we put into practice the Social Teaching of the Church in our daily lives. And yet the term "social justice" seems to have become a lightning rod that divides Catholics because it touches upon things that matter to every human being.

Social justice is an integral part of Church teaching. It is based on the rights that flow from and safeguard human dignity, and it compels us to work with others to help make social institutions better serve the common good. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* devotes an entire section (#1928-1948) to the topic of social justice. Similarly, the 2004 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, a required reading for all who work in the area of social justice and social concerns of the Church, gives a magnificent overview of the wider topic of the Church's social doctrine, and teaches clearly the meaning of social justice.

Pope Francis: Embodiment of Gaudium et Spes

From his first hours as pope, Francis has re-enacted or spoken of the great pastoral transformation of Vatican II as his own agenda. Francis' actions parallel the simple, ever-human gestures of St. John XXIII so that the world soon recognized him, as it does Francis, as a man it can approach easily because he strives to understand and love its people rather than to condemn and make its people anxious about their salvation.

Pope Francis is becoming for us the activation or embodiment of "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the World." Not only will he be remembered as the Pope of *Evangelii Gaudium* but he is also the Pope of *Gaudium et Spes*. For just as *Gaudium et Spes* awoke the church out of its ecclesial slumber 50 years ago by insisting that to be Christian meant to pursue justice in every corner of the globe, the former Jesuit Cardinal Archbishop of Buenos Aires is doing the same in his new role as Bishop of Rome. Pope

Francis has chosen to emphasize not only *Lumen Gentium* but especially *Gaudium et Spes*.

Gaudium et Spes and our Priesthood

On June 6 of this year, Pope Francis made a one-day pastoral visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina. At a meeting with priests and religious, he spoke these words:

“The priest, the consecrated person, is called to live the anguish and the hope of the people; to work in concrete circumstances often characterized by tensions, discord, suspicions, insecurities and poverty. Faced with these painful situations, we ask God to grant us hearts that can be moved, capable of showing empathy; there is no greater witness than to be close to the spiritual and material needs of the faithful. It is the task of us bishops, priests and religious to make the people feel the nearness of God; to feel his comforting and healing hand; to be familiar with the wounds and tears of our people; to never tire of opening our hearts and offering a hand to all who ask us for help, and to all those who, perhaps because they feel ashamed, do not ask our help, but who are in great need of it.”

Laudato Si: Gaudium et Spes in action

On June 18, Pope Francis released his second encyclical, *Laudato Si: “On the Care of our Common Home* – addressed to “everyone living on this planet.” This lengthy papal document calls for a new way of looking at things. We face an urgent crisis, when the earth has begun to look more and more like, in Francis's vivid image, “an immense pile of filth”. Still, the document is hopeful, reminding us that because God is with us, all of us can strive to change course. We can move towards an “ecological conversion” in which we can listen to the “cry of the earth and the cry of the poor”. To use religious language, what the Pope is calling for is conversion. This is a deeply uncomfortable encyclical because it is not content simply to face up to the institutional and moral issues of climate change and environmental degradation, but addresses the deeper tragedy of humanity itself.

Until now, the dialogue about the environment has been framed mainly using political, scientific and economic language. Now, the language of faith enters the discussion - clearly, decisively and systematically. Against those who argue that a papal encyclical on the environment has no real authority, Pope Francis explicitly states that *Laudato Si* is now added to the body of the Church's social teaching”. It continues the church's reflection on modern-day problems that began with Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, on capital and labor, published in 1891.

More than any other encyclical, *Laudato Si* draws from the experiences of people around the world, referencing the findings of bishops' conferences from Brazil, New Zealand, Southern Africa, Bolivia, Portugal, Germany, Argentina, the Dominican Republic, the Philippines, Australia, Canada and the United States.

In our preaching and presentation of *Laudato Si* to the world, we have an obligation to present the full picture of this landmark papal document. When the environmental world welcomes the Pope as a powerful ally and the religious Right dismisses him as a disingenuous radical, socialist or a communist, these have missed the essential point. This is the Gospel call, as disconcertingly direct today as was Jesus's confrontation with the rich young man, the scribes and the Pharisees, or the moneychangers in the Temple. That's the unique quality of the encyclical. It is not just the declaration of assent to a program of international environmental action, but also the prophetic voice of the Church. It is therefore far more fundamentally disturbing and uncomfortable, demanding an individual response that will change our lives forever. This is *Gaudium et Spes* in our day.

Giving flesh and blood to Gaudium et Spes in our day

As Archbishop of Argentina's capital – a diocese with more than three million inhabitants – Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio developed and implemented a pastoral missionary plan based on communion and evangelization. He had four main goals: open and brotherly communities, an informed laity playing a lead role, evangelization efforts addressed to every inhabitant of the city, and assistance to the poor and the sick. He asked priests and lay people to work closely together in the work of evangelization and education of the people. During many years of fruitful pastoral ministry, Cardinal Bergoglio insisted, "Teachers of the faith need to get out of their cave," and the clergy "out of the sacristy." He required parish priests to live with their people, and in the same conditions as their people, even in radical simplicity and poverty. Authentic pastors should have the "odor of the sheep" if they are to be effective and credible.

When Cardinal Bergoglio spoke of social justice, he called people first of all to pick up the Catechism and to rediscover the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes. His project was and remains very simple: if you follow Christ, you understand that "trampling upon a person's dignity is a serious sin."

"My people are poor and I am one of them", Cardinal Bergoglio said so often, explaining his decision to live in an apartment above a school and cook his own meals. He frequented the Villas Miserias, advised his priests to show mercy and apostolic courage and to keep their doors open to everyone. One year before his election to the See of Peter, the Cardinal wrote a pastoral letter in which he reprimanded his own priests for refusing the Sacrament of Baptism to the children of single mothers.

His life was radically changed two years ago March 13 when "Padre Jorge," as he was known by so many in Argentina, became Pope Francis. We have all witnessed and been recipients of his Petrine Ministry for the past two years. Since his election as Bishop of Rome, he has captured the mind and heart not only of the Church but also of the world. He has not changed a single doctrine of the Church but has ushered in a way of speaking, a new style of leadership that has shaken the Church and impacted the world.

Some call him a revolutionary. At the heart of his message is a transformative call to reconciliation and mercy. As leader of the Catholic Church, he asks us to let go of different forms of thinking and the desire to impose certain ideas at all costs. He proposes a humble way of committed people who base their lives on Gospel living. For Francis, compassion and mercy can truly change the world. This is the Christian revolution: namely a conversion to the origin of the Gospel message as a way to the future, a true revolution of tenderness and mercy.

Pope Francis' electrifying homily to the new Cardinals in St. Peter's Basilica on February 15, 2015, is one of the most significant addresses that he has given in his two-year pontificate. Centered on "the Gospel of the marginalized," it provides a road map for Catholic Church leaders and educators. Commenting on Jesus' cure of the leper in Mark's Gospel, he said, "Compassion leads Jesus to concrete action: he reinstates the marginalized!" Jesus responds "immediately" to the leper's plea "without waiting to study the situation and all its possible consequences" because "for Jesus, what matters above all is reaching out to save those far off, healing the wounds of the sick, restoring everyone to God's family!"

"This is scandalous to some people! but "Jesus is not afraid of this kind of scandal! He does not think of the closed-minded who are scandalized even by a work of healing, scandalized before any kind of openness, by any action outside of their mental and spiritual boxes, by any caress or sign of tenderness that does not fit into their usual thinking and their ritual purity. He wanted to reinstate the outcast, to save those outside the camp."

Francis finds the contemporary Church at a crossroads: "**There are two ways of thinking and of having faith: we can fear to lose the saved and we can want to save the lost.**" There is "the thinking of the doctors of the law, which would remove the danger by casting out the diseased person," and "the thinking of God, who in his mercy embraces and accepts by reinstating him and turning evil into good, condemnation into salvation and exclusion into proclamation."

"These two ways of thinking are present throughout the church's history: **casting off and reinstating**," Francis said. He recalled that Sts. Peter and Paul caused scandal, faced criticism, resistance and even hostility for following the path of reinstatement. Francis, and many of those who have embraced his message and strive to follow his example are also being criticized today for the same things: for not casting off but striving to reinstate those who are on the peripheries for a variety of reasons. ...In healing the leper, "Jesus does not harm the healthy. Rather, he frees them from fear. He does not endanger them, but gives them a brother.

The Church of Francis is the Church of Jesus Christ

If you haven't yet realized it, the Renaissance Papacy is over. Francis wants the church to be an instrument of reconciliation and welcome, a church capable of warming

hearts, a church that is not bent over on herself but always seeking those on the periphery and those who are lost, a church capable of leading people home.

Pope Francis is neither conservative nor liberal but a radical who wants to bring about a revolution of mercy. In *Evangelii Gaudium*, he invites and challenges all of us to move beyond our “comfort zones.” He wants us to be warm, welcoming and forgiving. He wants us to eat with tax collectors and sinners; he wants us to forgive the woman caught in adultery (while admonishing her to sin no more); he wants us to welcome and respect foreigners (even our enemies), and, above all, not to judge others. He has spoken simply, powerfully and beautifully about returning to lost unity, a desire to achieve a missing fullness, a disarming invitation to simply come together to witness to the beauty of the love of Christ. He wants to build bridges that everyone can cross. He is especially conscious of the poor and those who have been marginalized, social outcasts kept on the fringes of society.

For Pope Francis, **authentic power is service**: Power in the Church is not about who kisses one’s hand but how many feet one can wash in the service of Christ. Pope Francis made this clear when he visited a youth detention center on his first Holy Thursday in Rome in 2013 and chose to wash the feet of young offenders, including two young women and two Muslims. He continued that tradition last year by washing the feet of elderly women and men and those with severe handicaps. This year on Holy Thursday, he washed the feet of 12 prisoners at Rome’s Rebibbia prison – incarcerated women and men. If we do not learn this Christian rule, we will never be able to understand Jesus’ true message on power and be effective teachers, educators, pastoral workers, and agents of justice and peace. Pope Francis has a passion for the poor, the immigrant, the forgotten, and the “throw-aways.” He is the first Pope from the Southern Hemisphere, and the first from Latin America; these are the areas of the world where poverty is so great. Francis is inviting us to become witnesses, missionaries and disciples. That is our mission today. It is not new. Francis has brought new urgency, new passion, and I would suggest, new authenticity to this mission.

Field Hospitals in today’s world

I leave you with this final image from the first Jesuit Pope – the powerful image of the “field hospital” which he uses often that is drawn from the Spiritual Exercises. It is the opposite image of a fortress under siege. The image of a church as a field hospital is not just a simple, pretty poetic metaphor; from this very image we can derive an understanding of both the church’s mission and the sacraments of salvation. It is useless to ask a seriously injured person if he has high cholesterol and about the level of his blood sugars! You have to heal his wounds." This preferential option for those hurt by life reflects St. John XXIII's reply when asked why he convened Vatican II: ***"To make the human sojourn on earth less sad."***

On the late afternoon of March 13, 2013, Jorge Mario Bergoglio received the call to go, rebuild, repair, renew and heal the church. There are those who delight in describing the new Pope as a bold, brazen revolutionary sent to rock the boat. Others

think he has come to cause a massive shipwreck. But the only revolution that Pope Francis has inaugurated is a revolution of tenderness, the very words he used in his recent major letter on "The Joy of the Gospel." [Evangelii Gaudium #88] And the second revolution he has inaugurated is the revolution of normalcy. What he is doing is normal human, Christian behavior. These are the revolutions at the heart and soul of Pope Francis' ministry. This Bishop of Rome demands a lot while preaching about a God of mercy, by engaging joyfully with nonbelievers, atheists, agnostics, skeptics, and those sitting on the fences of life- many who thought that Christianity has nothing left to add to the equations of life. This very room is filled with field hospital workers and revolutionaries, caregivers of mercy and revolutionaries of tenderness and normalcy already deployed in the great battlefields of life. In the heart and mind of Pope Francis, we need "a church that is again capable of restoring citizenship to so many of its children that walk as if in exodus. Christian citizenship is above all the result of God's mercy. Each of you has the power to restore that citizenship to so many people who are wandering and lost.

The ultimate evaluation of Vatican II, and for that matter, of all of our pastoral, spiritual and educational endeavors will be if we judge our efforts according to the mind and heart of Christ. He is the Lord of history. Our world and our times belong to him. Let us evaluate everything we are and do in terms of how well we have opened our eyes and the eyes of others to the radiant beauty of Christ. If we wish to be ambassadors, instruments, bearers of the message of *Gaudium et Spes* and icons of *Evangelii Gaudium* in the world today, if we truly desire to be workers of the authentic justice articulated so powerfully in the Council's Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, we must be in direct contact with Jesus of Nazareth, who is the joy and hope of the human family. We encounter this Jesus in the Church, in the sacraments and in the liturgy. Take heed of Pope Francis' words recently spoken to future apostolic nuncios at the Vatican's Diplomatic Academy:

"It is not possible to represent someone without reflecting their features, without evoking their face."

"Do not lose sight of the face of He Who is at the origin of your journey."

"Do not fish in aquariums or farms, but instead have the courage to leave behind the safe margins of what is already known."

"Cast your nets and rods in less obvious seas."

And make your own the words Pope Francis spoke to new Archbishops gathered around the tomb of Peter yesterday morning, June 29, to celebrate the feast of Saints Peter and Paul: *"Teach prayer by praying, announce the faith by believing; offer witness by living!"*

Those words are also spoken to us. Go and announce the Joy of the Gospel of Jesus! Go and be his joy and hope for the world! Thank you.