



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
FOR THE CLOSING OF THE FOURTH WORLD CONGRESS
SPONSORED BY "SCHOLAS OCCURRENTES"**

*Synod Hall
Thursday, 5 February 2015*

[Multimedia]

Video message of the Holy Father to children

In each one of you there is a chest, a box, and inside there's a treasure. Your job is to open the chest and pull out the treasure, make it grow, give it to others, and receive the treasure of others. We all have a treasure inside of us. If we keep it closed, it stays closed; if we share it with others, the treasure multiplies with the treasures that come from others.

What I want to tell you is: do not hide the treasure which each one of you has. Sometimes it's easy to find, sometimes you must go on a treasure hunt, you don't find it immediately. But once you find it, share it! Because, through sharing it, you receive from another and it multiplies. This is what I want to tell you, boys and girls: Go forward! What you do in the place where you are also helps us all to understand that life is a beautiful treasure, but it only makes sense when we give it. Thank you!

Final Address

First of all, I thank you for the effort you have made in order to attend this Fourth Congress. I thank you for your interventions, born from experience.

One thing that concerns me a great deal is how to achieve harmony, which is not simply reaching partial compromises, agreements and understandings. Harmony, in whatever form, is creating an understanding of differences, accepting differences, appreciating differences and allowing them to harmonize, but not fragment.

The message we heard from LUMSA brought to mind one of my dictums: "We cannot change the

world if we do not change education”. And something is totally discordant. I thought that this only existed in Latin America or in a few Latin American countries, with which I am more familiar. But it is worldwide. It concerns an educational pact, an educational pact between the family, school, homeland and culture. It is broken, badly broken and it cannot be pieced back together. The broken educational pact means that society, the family, as well as various institutions, delegate education to the educational agents, to the teachers, who — generally poorly paid — shoulder this responsibility and, should they not achieve success, are reprimanded. Yet no one reprimands the various institutions that have breached the educational pact, having delegated it to the expertise of a teacher. I would like to pay tribute to the teachers, for they have been handed this hot potato and have found the courage to go on.

Scholas would like in some way to combine everyone’s efforts for education. It would like to harmoniously reform the educational pact, for only in this way — if all those in charge of the education of our children and young people work together — can education change. For this reason, *Scholas* seeks to include culture, sport, science; for this reason *Scholas* looks for bridges, emerging from the “small” and seeking elsewhere. Today on all the continents this interaction, this perspective is being implemented. But at the same time *Scholas* seeks to harmonize the education of the child, the young person, the student. It is not simply imparting information, the language of the mind. This is not enough. *Scholas* wants to harmonize the language of the mind with the language of the heart and the language of the hands so that a person, a child, a youth may think what he feels and what he does; may feel what he thinks and what he does; may do what he feels and what he thinks. Combine this harmony within the very person, in the student, and in universal harmony, so that we all undertake the educational pact and, in so doing, emerge from this crisis of civilization that we are living in, and take the step that civilization itself demands of us.

Each country in which *Scholas* is present must question its tradition — its historical tradition, its popular tradition — the founding elements which are the underlying cultural features of the homeland. And beginning from what has given meaning to that homeland, to that nation, draw forth harmonizing universality. Italian culture, for example, cannot deny Dante as a foundational element. Argentine culture, which I know, cannot deny *Martín Fierro*, our foundational poem. And I would like to ask, but I will not, how many Argentines present here have studied, read, meditated on *Martín Fierro*? Turning to the cultural matters that have given us meaning, that gave us the first unit of the national culture of the peoples. Each country recovering what is most emblematic to share with others and harmonizing it better: this is educating in culture.

Furthermore, we must discover the depth of the person, the fundamental health, the capacity for lightheartedness, the creative capacity for play. The Book of Wisdom says that God was playful, the Wisdom of God was playful. Rediscover play as a learning experience, as an educational experience, so that education will no longer be merely information, but creativity at play. Rediscover this this playful aspect which enables us to grow in creativity and in joint work.

Lastly, seek out beauty in each one of us, in our peoples, the beauty that roots us in our art, in our music, in our painting, in our sculpture, in our literature. All that is beautiful. Educating in beauty, for harmony means beauty and we cannot achieve the harmony of the educational system if we do not have this perception of beauty.

I thank you for all you are doing and for the way you are cooperating in this challenge, which is creative: creating the educational pact — recreating it because we are recreating education like this —; creating harmony among the three personal forms of expression: that of the hands, that of the heart, and that of the mind; creative in the playful dimension of a person, that healthy wasting of time by combining work and play; creative in beauty, which we have already encountered at the root of the respective national identities, everyone together. This is the challenge. Who invented it? No one knows, but there it is. Are there problems? Many, and many yet to be resolved in organizing all of this. Are we tempted? Yes. Every endeavour undertaken has temptations; the temptation to quit, to corruption, to deviousness. For this reason joint work and the vigilance of all are necessary in order that this spark that has been born may continue to burn, helping to rebuild and harmonize the educational pact. It is the children who will benefit from all this. Thus I thank you for what you are doing for the future, because to speak of “children” is to speak of the “future”. Thank you.