

## Faith Based Conversation 9th Monthly meeting

### A few challenges from Pope Francis

When media and the digital world become omnipresent, their influence can stop people from learning how to live wisely, to think deeply and to love generously. In this context, the great sages of the past run the risk of going unheard amid the noise and distractions of an information overload. Efforts need to be made to help these media become sources of new cultural progress for humanity and not a threat to our deepest riches. True wisdom, as the fruit of self-examination, dialogue and generous encounter between persons, is not acquired by a mere accumulation of data which eventually leads to overload and confusion, a sort of mental pollution. Real relationships with others, with all the challenges they entail, now tend to be replaced by a type of internet communication which enables us to choose or eliminate relationships at whim, thus giving rise to a new type of contrived emotion which has more to do with devices and displays than with other people and with nature. Today's media do enable us to communicate and to share our knowledge and affections. Yet at times they also shield us from direct contact with the pain, the fears and the joys of others and the complexity of their personal experiences. For this reason, we should be concerned that, alongside the exciting possibilities offered by these media, a deep and melancholic dissatisfaction with interpersonal relations, or a harmful sense of isolation, can also arise. *Laudato Si* 47

Jesus does not eliminate the concern and search for daily food. No, He does not remove the concern for all that can make life more progressive. But Jesus reminds us that the true meaning of our earthly existence lies at the end, in eternity, it lies in the encounter with Him, who is gift and giver. He also reminds us that human history with its suffering and joy must be seen in a *horizon of eternity*, that is, in that horizon of the definitive encounter with Him. And this encounter illuminates all the days of our life.

If we think of this encounter, of this great gift, the small gifts of life, even the suffering, the worries will be illuminated by the hope of this encounter. "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst" (v. 35). This refers to the Eucharist, the greatest gift that satisfies the soul and the body. Meeting and welcoming within us Jesus, "Bread of Life", gives meaning and hope to the often winding journey of life. *Angelus* 2 Aug 2015

A summary from Anthony Esolen's article

<http://www.crisismagazine.com/2015/reform-and-renewal-starts-with-us>

"We are no longer living in a pagan world, but in a sub-pagan world. To reclaim our world for God and peace, there is a lot of work to be done and we must begin and do what we can.

- \* Build new schools, reform old schools, and abandon irreformable ones. Get your children out of sub-pagan schools.
- \* Restore your parish church and bring reverence back to the liturgy. Get great timeless art, bring back music that can truly be called sacred in both melody and lyrics.
- \* Acquaint yourself with the proper use of the zipper. Live truly chaste lives according to your vocation in life. Bring back healthy courtship customs.
- \* Be social. Get some wholesome activities going in the parish that provide fun, prayer and opportunities to serve others.
- \* Read good books. Be armed with the thoughts of Chesterton, Benedict XVI, Dante and the Catechism.
- \* Recover the human things. Take time to be with each other as friends, on walks, making music and dancing. Slow down the pace of life and enjoy it.
- \* Pray like the pilgrim you are. Increase your time in prayer, and keep the certainty of death and your eternal destination in mind.
- \* Whatever you do, do it as though everything depends on just that. Everyone can do something, and no matter how little that something is, that something is vitally important."