

Faith Based Conversation 10th Monthly meeting

A few challenges from Pope Francis

Effective Christian witness is not about bombarding people with religious messages, but about our willingness to be available to others “by patiently and respectfully engaging their questions and their doubts as they advance in their search for the truth and the meaning of human existence”

(BENEDICT XVI, *Message for the 47th World Communications Day, 2013*).

We need but recall the story of the disciples on the way to Emmaus. We have to be able to dialogue with the men and women of today, to understand their expectations, doubts and hopes, and to bring them the Gospel, Jesus Christ himself, God incarnate, who died and rose to free us from sin and death. We are challenged to be people of depth, attentive to what is happening around us and spiritually alert. To dialogue means to believe that the “other” has something worthwhile to say, and to entertain his or her point of view and perspective. Engaging in dialogue does not mean renouncing our own ideas and traditions, but the claim that they alone are valid or absolute.

Message for 48th World Communications Day, 1 Jun 2014

The future of humanity does not lie solely in the hands of great leaders, the great powers and the elites. It is fundamentally in the hands of peoples and in their ability to organize. It is in their hands, which can guide with humility and conviction this process of change. I am with you. Let us together say from the heart: no family without lodging, no rural worker without land, no labourer without rights, no people without sovereignty, no individual without dignity, no child without childhood, no young person without a future, no elderly person without a venerable old age. Keep up your struggle and, please, take great care of Mother Earth. I pray for you and with you, and I ask God our Father to accompany you and to bless you, to fill you with his love and defend you on your way by granting you in

abundance that strength which keeps us on our feet: that strength is hope, the hope which does not disappoint. Thank you and I ask you, please, to pray for me. *World Meeting of Popular Movements 9 Jul 2015*

Happy Meetings

The good God knows who needs to hear His message of love through us today, and through whom we need to hear it too. May St Raphael assist us.

Prayer to St. Raphael:

O Raphael, lead us toward those we are waiting for, those who are waiting for us. Raphael, Angel of happy meeting, lead us by the hand toward those we are looking for. May all our movements be guided by your light and transfigured with your joy.

Angel, guide of Tobias, lay the request we now address to you at the feet of Him on whose unveiled face you are privileged to gaze. Lonely and tired, crushed by the separations and sorrows of life, we feel the need of calling you and of pleading for the protection of your wings, that we may not be as strangers in the province of joy, all ignorant of the concerns of our country.

Remember the weak, you who are strong, you whose home lies beyond the region of thunder, in a land that is always peaceful, always serene and bright with the resplendent glory of God. Amen.

St John Francis Regis

This saint was accustomed to invoke the Guardian Angel of any church he would pass both for the parish itself and its parishioners. When passing a cemetery he would pray to the dead asking their help as he blessed the site. Walking along one day, he felt an invisible hand holding him back from proceeding any further. At that moment, someone was calling from an open window of a nearby house, seeking help for a dying person. He rushed into the house and was in time to administer the last rites and to hear the dying man’s confession. It was his Guardian Angel who held him back thus enabling him to reconcile the dying man to God.