



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE "EUROMOOT"
OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF GUIDES AND SCOUTS OF EUROPE (UIGSE)**

*Paul VI Audience Hall
Saturday, 3 August 2019*

[Multimedia]

Dear Friends, Good morning and welcome!

I thank Cardinal Angelo Bagnasco for his words and I also thank all of you for being here, and for undertaking a long walk to get here! You have come a long way. Surely you are a little tired. I am certain of one thing: that inside you feel freer than before. I am certain of this. And what does this tell us? That freedom is achieved on the move; it is not bought at the supermarket. It is achieved on the move. Freedom is not achieved by staying locked in a room with a cell phone, nor by overdoing it in order to escape reality somewhat. No, freedom is achieved on the move, step by step, together with others, never alone!

You had five stops on your route, five encounters with great saints who travelled through Europe in different eras: Paul of Tarsus, Benedict of Nursia, Cyril and Methodius, Francis of Assisi, Catherine of Siena. These people, these saints, what did they have in common? They did not wait for something from life or from others, but trusted in God and took risks; they got involved, on the move in order to achieve dreams so great that after centuries they have done good for us too, for you, for everyone. They gave their life; they did not keep it for themselves. So, after these five encounters, I would like to leave you five words. You had five encounters; I would like to leave you five words. They are not my own, but are from the Gospel which accompanied you on your journey and which I invite you to keep with you always, as your navigator — the Gospel is the true navigator for the journey of life — and to open it each day, because the Gospel is the map for life. Here are Jesus' five words; they are five words, easy to remember: “give, and it will be given to you” (Lk 6:38). Five words, but one entire message, a plan for life. Simple words, which outline a

clear route. *Give, and it will be given to you.*

First and foremost, *give*. Today one thinks immediately of having. Many live with the sole purpose of possessing what they like. But they are never satisfied, because when you have one thing you want another, and then yet another, and so on, without end. Having has no fill. Having more causes more hunger, more desire to have, without finding what does the heart good. The heart works out not by having, but by giving. Having fattens the heart, makes it heavy, makes it worldly. Giving makes it light. It is a daily workout. For this reason Jesus sets as the point of departure not having, but giving: *give*, that is, start getting into the game of life! To give means to stand up from the sofa, from the comforts that make one withdraw into oneself, and get on the move. To give means to stop enduring life and go down into the field in order to give the world the gift of good. Please, do not leave life on the night stand; do not be content to watch it pass by on television; do not believe that the next app you download will make you happy. “Our best dreams are only attained through hope, patience and commitment, and not in haste” (Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christus Vivit*, 142). God accompanies you on this journey and cheers you on, so you can give your best. There is also another thing in the desire to have: alienation. You lose your originality and will become a photocopy. But God created each person original, with your own name. Let us not make of our originality — as that 16-year-old youth Carlo Acutis said — a photocopy. How many young people today — it is sad — are a photocopy; they have lost their originality and copy the identity of any other originality. You say: “Okay, I’ll give my best, but there is a lot of indifference going around, so many think only of themselves. Won’t I look naïve and lose out, and by giving become the kind of fool that everyone laughs at?”. I would like to tell you: trust in Jesus. Trust in Jesus. After saying *give*, he adds: *it will be given to you*. God is Father and he will give you more than you imagine. God does not leave hands empty. When it seems he is taking something from you, it is only to make room and give you more and better, to help you advance on the journey. He frees you from the false promises of consumerism in order to make you free within. Jesus makes you happy within, not on the outside. Jesus does not give you make-up, no: he makes inner reality; he makes you beautiful from within. He makes you beautiful from within! Not from the outside. He gives you what nothing can give you; because the latest smartphone, the fastest car or stylish dress, beyond never being enough, will never give you the joy of feeling loved and also the joy of loving. This is true joy: feeling loved and loving.

Thus, the first thing, give. It is the secret of life. Do you know why? Because life is a special reality: “I want to own life, to own my life. How do I do it?”. Life is owned only by giving it, by giving it. This way you will own your life! But you could say: “Even if I give my best, reality doesn’t change for the better”. It is not true. Do you know why? Because you are unique. Because no one in the world can give the world what you are called to give. Someone said the same thing to Mother Teresa of Calcutta: “But sister, you do these things with the poor, with the dying.... You do so many beautiful things.... But what use is this in a world so pagan, so atheist, so evil, so war-torn?”. And she said: “One more drop in the ocean. If I don’t give it no one will”. No one can give what I, alone, can give. No one can give the world what you are called to give! Each one of you is unique and — please

never forget it — is precious in the eyes of God. You are precious to the Church; you are precious to me. I would like to say it to each one of you: you are precious to me. You are precious to God. It would be beautiful for you to say it from the heart each time you are together, to each one, from the heart: “You are precious; you are precious...”. This is the gift.

Jesus’ invitation, *Give, and it will be given to you*, also applies in regard to others. I like to think about what — in Scout lingo — you call *Departure*, that is, at the moment in which you choose to make service your way of life. To open yourself to the other, to live to do good for others, to experience — to use your words — *Scout Brotherhood*: if you live this way, *it will be given to you*. Yes, because if you build bridges toward others you will see others cross those bridges toward you. On the other hand, when you are alone, looking into the air, getting lost in your own fantasies, you are living in soap bubbles. But a life that wanders through the air evaporates rather than moving forward. Look at your hands, made for building, for serving, giving and for giving to others, and tell yourselves: “I care; the other concerns me”.

Give, and it will be given to you also applies to creation. If we continue to exploit it, it will teach us a terrible lesson. We are already seeing it. If we take care of it, we will have a home tomorrow too. In your journey you were immersed in nature. Beautiful! Did you notice that creation has no boundaries? Creation has no boundaries: it is of everyone and for everyone. Plants, forests, animals grow without borders, without customs. Creation is an open book that offers a valuable lesson: we are in the world to encounter others, to create communion, because we are all connected. Creation is made to connect us with God and to each other; it is *God’s social network*. But if we start from preconceptions about others, from preestablished ideas, we will always see limits and barriers. Instead, if we begin to *encounter others*, with their history, with their reality, we will discover a brother or sister with whom to inhabit the common home, to inhabit creation which has no boundaries.

Dear friends, you have walked here, following the motto *Parate viam Domini*. I encourage you to prepare the way of the Lord wherever you are. The way of the lord is easy to recognize: it is what has giving as its sense of direction, which makes the world go forward; not having, which makes the world turn backwards. Do not forget: having is like this. Giving is like this. Having makes you turn backwards. Giving makes you go forward. By choosing the path of giving you become *active citizens*, as your founder Baden Powell used to say. It is so important today: the Lord does not seek only people for their goodness — not just this — but the Lord seeks people who do good! Also love love for Europe, which brings you together, does not require only attentive observers, but active builders: builders of reconciled and integrated societies, which give life to a renewed Europe; not protectors of spaces, but creators of encounters. Europe needs to encounter itself. You, *Rovers* and *Guides* from all of Europe, have this historic task. With your journey and your dreams you are already forging the European spirit. The emblem of all Scouts is the fleur-de-lis. It is the symbol that indicates north on compasses and on antique nautical maps. It reminds us that *Scouting* seeks to form men and women who open paths toward on High and keep the right path,

that of good. Do not forget: give, always this way, forward; not with the desire to have, which always leads backwards. *Give, and it will be given to you.* Giving will fulfil your desire. Dear *Sentries* and *Rovers* of Europe, I hope you will be trail blazers on the path of giving, trail blazers on this path of donation, of giving. *Give, and it will be given to you.* I thank you; I ask you to pray for me and I wish you a good journey!