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Pope Leo XIV delivers the homily during the canonization Mass of St. Carlo Acutis, a British-born Italian boy who became the first millennial to be made a Catholic saint, and St. Pier Giorgio Frassati, in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican, Sept. 7. (OSV News/Reuters/Guglielmo Mangiapane)



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This is the text from Pope Leo XIV's homily for the canonization Mass for Saints Carlo Acutis and Pier Giorgio Frassati, given Sept. 7 in St. Peter's Square.

Dear brothers and sisters,

In the first reading, we heard a question: (Lord,) "who has learned your counsel, unless you have given wisdom and sent your holy spirit from on high?" This question comes after two young Blesseds, Pier Giorgio Frassati and Carlo Acutis, were proclaimed saints, and this is providential because in the Book of Wisdom, this question is attributed to a young man like them: King Solomon.

Upon the death of his father David, he realized that he had many things: power, wealth, health, youth, beauty, and the entire kingdom. It was precisely this great abundance of resources that raised a question in his heart: "What must I do so that nothing is lost?" Solomon understood that the only way to find an answer was to ask

God for an even greater gift, that of his wisdom, so that he might know God's plans and follow them faithfully. He realized, in fact, that only in this way would everything find its place in the Lord's great plan. Yes, because the greatest risk in life is to waste it outside of God's plan.

Jesus, too, in the Gospel, speaks to us of a plan to which we must commit wholeheartedly. He says: "Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple"; and again: "none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions." He calls us to abandon ourselves without hesitation to the adventure that he offers us, with the intelligence and strength that comes from his Spirit, that we can receive to the extent that we empty ourselves of the things and ideas to which we are attached, in order to listen to his word.

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Many young people, over the centuries, have had to face this crossroad in their lives. Think of St. Francis of Assisi, like Solomon, he too was young and rich, thirsty for glory and fame. That is why he went to war, hoping to be knighted and adorned with honors. But Jesus appeared to him along the way and asked him to reflect on what he was doing. Coming to his senses, he asked God a simple question: "Lord, what do you want me to do?" From there, he changed his life and began to write a different story: the wonderful story of holiness that we all know, stripping himself of everything to follow the Lord, living in poverty and preferring the love of his brothers and sisters, especially the weakest and smallest, to his father's gold, silver and precious fabrics.

How many similar saints we could recall! Sometimes we portray them as great figures, forgetting that for them it all began when, while still young, they said "yes" to God and gave themselves to him completely, keeping nothing for themselves. St. Augustine recounts that, in the "tortuous and tangled knot" of his life, a voice deep within him said: "I want you. God gave him a new direction, a new path, a new reason, in which nothing of his life was lost.

In this setting, today we look to St. Pier Giorgio Frassati and St. Carlo Acutis: a young man from the early 20th century and a teenager from our own day, both in love with Jesus and ready to give everything for him.

A person holds up a picture of Carlo Acutis as a crowd gathers at St. Peter's Square at the Vat

A person holds up a picture of Carlo Acutis as a crowd gathers at St. Peter's Square at the Vatican for the canonization ofAcutis and Pier Giorgio Frassati Sept. 7. (OSV News/Reuters/Matteo Minnella)

Pier Giorgio encountered the Lord through school and church groups — Catholic Action, the Conferences of St. Vincent, the FUCI (Italian Catholic University Federation), the Dominican Third Order — and he bore witness to God with his joy of living and of being a Christian in prayer, friendship and charity. This was so evident that seeing him walking the streets of Turin with carts full of supplies for the poor, his friends renamed him "Frassati Impresa Trasporti" (Frassati Transport Company)! Even today, Pier Giorgio's life is a beacon for lay spirituality. For him, faith was not a private devotion, but it was driven by the power of the Gospel and his membership in ecclesial associations. He was also generously committed to society, contributed to political life and devoted himself ardently to the service of the poor.

Carlo, for his part, encountered Jesus in his family, thanks to his parents, Andrea and Antonia — who are here today with his two siblings, Francesca and Michele — and then at school, and above all in the sacraments celebrated in the parish community. He grew up naturally integrating prayer, sport, study and charity into his days as a child and young man.

Both Pier Giorgio and Carlo cultivated their love for God and for their brothers and sisters through simple acts, available to everyone: daily Mass, prayer, and especially Eucharistic Adoration. Carlo used to say: "In front of the sun, you get a tan. In front of the Eucharist, you become a saint!" And again: "Sadness is looking at yourself; happiness is looking at God. Conversion is nothing more than shifting your gaze from below to above; a simple movement of the eyes is enough."

Another essential practice for them was frequent Confession. Carlo wrote: "The only thing we really have to fear is sin;" and he marveled because — in his own words — "people are so concerned with the beauty of their bodies and do not care about the beauty of their souls."

A crowd fills St. Peter's Square at the Vatican for the canonization Mass of Blessed Carlo Acut

A crowd fills St. Peter's Square at the Vatican for the canonization Mass of Blessed Carlo Acutis and Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati Sept. 7. (OSV News/Reuters/Guglielmo

Mangiapane)

Finally, both had a great devotion to the saints and to the Virgin Mary, and they practiced charity generously. Pier Giorgio said: "Around the poor and the sick, I see a light that we do not have." He called charity "the foundation of our religion" and, like Carlo, he practiced it above all through small, concrete gestures, often hidden, living what Pope Francis called "a holiness found in our next-door neighbors."

Even when illness struck them and cut short their young lives, not even this stopped them nor prevented them from loving, offering themselves to God, blessing him and praying to him for themselves and for everyone. One day Pier Giorgio said: "The day of my death will be the most beautiful day of my life." In his last photo, which shows him climbing a mountain in the Val di Lanzo, with his face turned towards his goal, he wrote: "Upwards." Moreover, Carlo, who was even younger than Pier Giorgio, loved to say that heaven has always been waiting for us, and that to love tomorrow is to give the best of our fruit today.

Dear friends, Saints Pier Giorgio Frassati and Carlo Acutis are an invitation to all of us, especially young people, not to squander our lives, but to direct them upwards and make them masterpieces. They encourage us with their words: "Not I, but God," as Carlo used to say. And Pier Giorgio: "If you have God at the center of all your actions, then you will reach the end." This is the simple but winning formula of their holiness. It is also the type of witness we are called to follow, in order to enjoy life to the full and meet the Lord in the feast of heaven.