

Pope Francis speaks again on world poverty

Thomas C. Fox | Jun. 7, 2013 NCR Today

Consider these pearls from Pope Francis today. They came in the form of answers to questions posed by students from Jesuit-run schools in Italy and Albania accompanied by their teachers and family members.

As a Vatican press release today reports, Francis said:

Poverty in the world is a scandal. In a world where there is so much wealth, so many resources to feed everyone, it is unfathomable that there are so many hungry children, that there are so many children without an education, so many poor persons. Poverty today is a cry. We all have to think if we can become a little poorer, all of us have to do this. How can I become a little poorer in order to be more like Jesus, who was the poor Teacher?? ?

First of all I want to tell you something, tell all you young persons: don't let yourselves be robbed of hope. Please, don't let it be stolen from you. The worldly spirit, wealth, the spirit of vanity, arrogance, and pride ? all these things steal hope. Where do I find hope? In the poor Jesus, Jesus who made himself poor for us. And you spoke of poverty. Poverty calls us to sow hope. This seems a bit difficult to understand. I remember Fr. Arrupe [Father General of the Jesuits from 1965-1983] wrote a letter to the Society's centers for social research.

Look, you can't speak of poverty without having experience with the poor. You can't speak of poverty in the abstract: that doesn't exist. Poverty is the flesh of the poor Jesus, in that child who is hungry, in the one who is sick, in those unjust social structures. Go forward; look there upon the flesh of Jesus. But don't let well being rob you of hope, that spirit of well being that, in the end, leads you to becoming a nothing in life. Young persons should bet on their high ideals, that's my advice. But where do I find hope? In the flesh of Jesus who suffers and in true poverty. There is a connection between the two.

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