

opusdei.org

Pope Greets UNIV Students

3,000 young people participating in the 49th edition of UNIV Forum attended the March 23 general audience in Saint Peter's Square with Pope Francis, who after his address extended a special greeting to them.

03/23/2016

Rome, March 23, 2016.

At 10 am, about 3,000 young people participating in the 49th edition of

UNIV attended the general audience in Saint Peter's Square with Pope Francis, who after his address extended a special greeting to those taking part in the university Forum organized by the Prelature of Opus Dei.

Pope Francis, who asked everyone to pray for the victims of the terrorist attacks in Brussels, spoke in the audience about the immense love Christ showed in the events of the Paschal Triduum, which he called “a great mystery of love and mercy.” “Our words are poor and insufficient to express it fully,” the Holy Father said. “We can be helped by the experience of a not well-known girl, who wrote sublime pages on the love of Christ. Her name was Julian of Norwich; she was illiterate, this girl who had visions of Jesus’ Passion and who then, having become a recluse, described in simple but profound and intense language, the meaning of

merciful love. She said this: ‘Then our good Lord asked me: *Are you happy that I suffered for you?* I said: Yes, good Lord, and I thank you very much; yes, good Lord, may you be blessed. Then Jesus, our good Lord, said: *If you are happy, so am I. To have suffered the Passion for you is a joy for me, a happiness, and eternal bliss; and if I could suffer more, I would do so.*’ This is our Jesus, who says to each one of us: *If I could suffer more for you, I would do so.*

“How beautiful these words are! They enable us to truly understand the immense and limitless love that the Lord has for each one of us. Let us be enveloped by this mercy that comes to us and, in these days, while we have our gaze fixed on the Passion and Death of the Lord, let us receive in our heart the greatness of his love and, as our Lady on Saturday, in silence, in the expectation of the Resurrection.”

(Zenit translation of entire audience is available [here](#).)

What is UNIV?

Each year, the UNIV Forum offers thousands of university students the opportunity to spend Holy Week close to the Pope in Rome, getting to know the city's cultural and historical treasures and walking in the footsteps of the first Christians. UNIV began in 1968, under the impetus of Saint Josemaria, founder of Opus Dei.

The topic for reflection by the students in 2016 is “The Impact of the Family.”

The president of UNIV 2016, the Dutchman Martijn Pouw, said: “At a time like the present, marked by economic and cultural crises that can easily isolate people, the testimony of the family is more necessary than ever. The family is the foundation of

the common good. It is in the family that people learn to rise above their own interests and be concerned about others. UNIV 2016 seeks to make a contribution to deepening family values and fostering a more human society that responds to the deepest needs of the human person.”

More information about the Forum is available at [https://
www.univforum.org](https://www.univforum.org).

The Prelature of Opus Dei organizes activities of Christian formation for those taking part in the Forum. As a sign of gratitude for the Jubilee Year of Mercy, a collection will be taken up among participants and given to Pope Francis for social initiatives he is interested in.

dev.opusdei.org/en/article/pope-greets-univ-students/ (08/11/2025)