

Addresses and Other Statements

At the Ceremony for the Awarding of Honorary Doctorates, University of Navarra, Pamplona, Spain (June 28, 2019)

My first words are congratulations for the new doctors *honoris causa*. As Chancellor of the University of Navarra, I am pleased to have awarded this distinction to Professors Fine, Picard, Moneo, and Archer, to whom I extend my warmest congratulations. The respective sponsors have already adequately described their outstanding and fruitful academic paths. We are honored to have these distinguished people become part of our faculty. By recognizing their merits in such diverse fields, we pay homage to the richness of university learning, to the value of the teaching vocation in the contemporary world, and to the service that academics provide society.

Twenty-five years ago, on an occasion such as this, Blessed Alvaro del Portillo invited teachers and students to “the adventure of bringing new enthusiasm to a tired world.” His successor, Bishop Javier Echevarría, reminded us that

the future belongs to young people. Today, on this festive day, I join in this double invitation, which can be summed up as helping to making the university a place of hope.

We often hear people say that we are living in times of crisis and uncertainty. Paradoxically, in the midst of progress and well-being never before achieved, we see the energy that impels people and societies forward running out. Where can we find the new “sap” needed to nourish and invigorate them? An important part of the answer can be found in a genuine education, in the transforming power of people who think for themselves, without being dominated by fashions, and who set the course for their own lives, going forward with a clear goal: “as pilgrims and not as wanderers.” We all realize that structural and legal changes have a limited impact on shaping society. The decisive factor is always the people. Hence university institutions are called to be places of hope.

Those of us who are linked to this University also find a decisive reason for hope. Because of its Christian inspiration, the formation offered by the University cultivates all fields of knowledge, including theological knowledge. The latter teaches us that any explanation of cultural and social change is incomplete if it does not

take into account Christ, Lord of History. God guides the destinies of this world in a way that always surprises us and always respects us: God wants free children, not slaves. This fatherly providence fills us with hope, frees us from all pessimism, and invites us to love the world.

The search for peace, the promotion of social justice and care for our common home are sustained and strengthened by an understanding of the world and the human person that is grounded in the Gospel. We cannot ignore the current problems related to respect for the life of each person, and for the importance of the family and freedom of education. We need to strive, together with all men and women of good will, to help make charity and justice reign in society. The university must be a beacon that, through a deeper grasp of the truth, illuminates the whole world, and provides the “sap” that, through coexistence and friendship, nourishes the souls of young people who pass through this campus year after year. Herein lies a source of vitality that can restore enthusiasm to a tired world.

A few months ago, Ismael Sánchez-Bella, the first Rector of this University, passed away. Along with the pain of his loss, we have the consolation that, thanks to him, St. Josemaría’s dreams for this institution are becoming a reality. Prof. Sanchez-Bella was a magnanimous person with a great

love for freedom, who put his best qualities at the service of a place of hope like this. Some have described him as an optimist. He, on the other hand, described himself as “a person unaware of the difficulties,” which perhaps explains his tenacity in the face of what seemed humanly impossible. In reality, he was moved by a firm faith in God and an unwavering trust in St. Josemaría. This is the vitality that he transmitted to this institution right from its beginnings and that we wish to continue offering.

St. Josemaría decided that this University should begin in Pamplona. It was born rooted in this land and will always have its home here. In recent years, efforts to obtain scholarships and funding opportunities, as well as the notable increase in international students, have gradually made the Founder’s dreams come true: that anyone who wishes to study here will be able to do so, and that the service provided by the University will reach people from every corner of the world.

Since the beginning of this university, we have tried to foster a way of understanding academic life that is reflected, as Blessed Alvaro said, in “an atmosphere of love for truth and freedom; of care for a job well done; of kindness, joy and forgiveness which makes getting along with others easier.” In fact, the harmonious coexistence of students and teachers offers a strong framework for learning to live

one's freedom fully. A first step is respect, because, as St. Josemaría said, "to be able to demand respect for [one's own] freedom, [each one] must know how to respect the freedom of others." Freedom is fully realized in love, in service to others. That is why the university is a source of freedom. There we need to learn to respect, love, and understand others. Only in a free environment is a genuine education possible. As one experienced professor pointed out, "education is not about colonizing the minds of students: it is about assisting the emergence of their own souls." Young people come into the classroom at a time when they have to make decisions that will mark the rest of their lives. In a situation of uncertainty like the present, they are grateful to find at the university guidance and direction. Counting

on their freedom, they are invited to promote just causes, to care for the most needy, and are helped to understand their future profession as a service to society.

I have referred very briefly to the university as a place of hope and freedom. I once again congratulate the four doctors who are becoming honorary members of our faculty today, because in their professional careers you can discover these fundamental values.

All of us will find it helpful to always keep in mind that the decisive source of our hope is God, who became man in Christ, and who walks alongside each of us, accompanying our freedom. To Him and to Holy Mary, Mother of Fairest Love, we entrust our desire to serve society.

Messages

Message on the Anniversary of the Birth of St. Josemaría (January 9, 2019)

My dear children: may Jesus watch over my daughters and sons for me!

Each year that begins is a new opportunity—"a new year, a new struggle," as Saint Josemaría liked to

say—to renew our eagerness to listen to God who speaks to us in our daily circumstances, to clean what clouds our vision and makes it hard for us to see Jesus. Let us strive to go forward *in novitate sensus* (Rom 12:2), with a new outlook, with a serene and joyful struggle, in order to get to know and love Christ better, and to welcome the gift of an ever new life: his Life in us.

We don't rely on our strength alone but, above all, on God's grace and the help of the others. The entire