

It highlights anew that all the human sciences are at the service of the truth. The marvelous beauty with which the Creator has enriched the world should be the constant subject of honest and true scientific investigation, as Blessed Josemaría Escrivá noted on a similar occasion.

3. How can institutions like the University of Navarre contribute to the birth of a new Europe?

The University of Navarre is a place where intellectual work is carried out with the greatest possible rigor, fostering a university spirit that tries to stress the common roots of European civilization. This will certainly contribute to furthering the challenge that our Holy Father has addressed to the Christians on our continent: the re-evangelization of Europe. We all hope that the new Europe that is being born will be Christian, at least in the principal values that inspire it.

4. What do you see as the cultural task of the Church in Italy, and how can Opus Dei contribute to its realization?

I think that the Church in Italy has drawn up a very ambitious and attractive pastoral program. Neither the grace of God nor the effort of all Italian Catholics will be lacking in carrying it to a successful conclusion. For some time I have been praying and asking others to pray for this. All the faithful of the Prelature of Opus Dei will make an effort, as always, to follow the directives of the bishops and to foster Christian life in the most varied sectors of civil society where they work professionally like any other citizen.

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"The Christian can't passively await the end of history," an article published on Easter Sunday in the Roman newspaper Il Tempo.

"I have risen: I am with you once more." So begins the Mass of Easter Sunday. Christ assures us that his victory over death is the guarantee and promise of a profound renewal for every Christian's life and for the entire world. Jesus Christ is alive, and he is with us forever. A superficial look at the world and at the constant wounds afflicting it seems to undermine the confidence of believers in Jesus' perennial presence in history. Nevertheless, as St. Paul assures us, the resurrection gives us a firm foundation for our faith (cf 1 Cor 15:16-17). Therefore no tragedy, whether in one's own life or in the course of history, can render Christian hope illusory.

Easter transforms our vision of our own life and of the history of the world. For 2,000 years Christians have believed that Christ has defeated sin and death. For 2,000 years they have obstinately cultivated the certainty that evil is a transitory phase in mankind's history. And for those 2,000 years daily experience seems to belie their belief. Many people, even in countries with a long Christian tradition, see faith as a childhood fancy. When one matures and confronts life, they say, one's eyes are opened to the reality of evil.

But for anyone who looks at the world with eyes of real faith, it is even more apparent today than ever that Christ has truly conquered sin. Although its devastating power raises barriers between peoples, tears reciprocal trust out of hearts, and reduces the need for love to an instinct of self-defense, sin is still no more than something passing, and will one day come to an end. Although hard and bitter, and difficult to combat, it is inevitably destined to disappear. The Christian knows that Christ's victory is assured. He firmly believes that evil will be erased, that love and justice will triumph.

But the Christian can't wait passively for the end of history. He is a citizen of the world, called by Christ to collaborate in salvation, in the struggle against evil. In an Easter homily, Blessed Josemaría Escrivá wrote: "It is easy to understand the impatience, anxiety and uneasiness of people whose naturally Christian soul stimulates them to fight the personal and social injustice which the human heart can create. So many centuries of men living side by side and still so much hate, so much destruction, so much fanaticism stored up. . . . I understand and share this impatience" (*Christ Is Passing By*, no. 111). But his conclusion is a cry of optimism: "Experience of sin, then, should not make us doubt our mission" (ibid., no. 114). We are called to share in the passion of Christ, in order to also share in his resurrection and spread its saving power. As long as we are here on earth, evil is always mixed with good, like the tares with the grains of wheat. Christian life is a continual call to conversion, to

struggle against sin, and not the presumption of impeccability. *Ave Rex noster tu solus nostrus es miseratus errores*, we recited in the liturgy for Wednesday of Holy Week: Christ has compassion on our errors and cures them.

Easter confirms us in hope. Christ's victory is our victory as well. When we accept the grace that reaches us through the Church's sacraments, we can truly uproot evil little by little from our lives. And thus we become sharers in Christ's salvific love, spreading throughout the world the gift he came to bring: the love that pardons and saves.

"Gift" is a word those in love frequently use. Why should we be surprised that "Gift" is also one of the names of the Holy Spirit, the Person of the Blessed Trinity upon whom the whole Church is meditating during this second year of preparation for the Great Jubilee? It is precisely He, the Holy Spirit, as the apostle John tells us (cf. *Jn* 7:39), who could not have been given to humanity without Good Friday. The Resurrection follows the Cross.

The Vicariate of Rome is working diligently to coordinate the city mission in preparation for the Great Jubilee. This represents a call to our commitment as witnesses of the Gospel, to our faith and our hope in the living Christ. It should be a true mobilization at the service of the spiritual needs of all the people of Rome. For as the Holy Father has reminded us during these days, the Church must be of service to humanity, if it wants to serve God.