

## Asia – stay youthful and be inspired



Asia, the biggest continent of the world, is well-known as the place where many wonderful stories and incredible treasures of the human kind were discovered, with the beauties of many cultures and ethnics. This is also the popular place where the seven Churches are named according to the Revelation book in the Bible, they are: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.

Nowadays, after a long period of changing and fluctuating in the history, Asia is moving forward, with many significant achievements in all aspects. Together with the fast growing social networks, there are more challenges for us, as the future generations, in a dynamic economy changing day by day . Therefore, it is necessary for the Church to find the new way, which comes from the dialogue and truly understanding, to proclaim the Gospel to the young people, especially in such a multicultural and dynamics continent .

Generally, the young people in Asian region have been benefited from the advancement of social, economic and political developments. Compared to previous generations, there is a higher proportion of young people in the region have completed primary school level. They are achieving better education, with the gross enrolment rate at the tertiary level reaching 18 per cent and 15 per cent respectively for male and female youth.

The gender inequalities have been reduced at all education levels, except some countries, such as Afghanistan, where roughly one woman for every four men is enrolled in tertiary education. Overall, in South and South-West Asian countries, 8 girls for every 10 boys are enrolled in secondary education, while 3 women for every 4 men are enrolled in tertiary education, representing lower female to male enrolment ratios than any other sub-region.

The difference of education qualities from among the regions within a country to the a country with the others is not only the big problem of the governments, but also a challenge for us to prepare ourselves, especially for our Decision – Making Process. For the reason that we are living within the time in which the fast growing economy is hardly influenced by the **Fourth Industrial Revolution**, or the '**Industry 4.0**'. By that way, the computers and automation will come together in an entirely

new way, with robotics connected remotely to computer systems equipped with machine learning algorithms that can learn and control the robotics with very little input from human operators. It means that, from now on, the marketplace will become more fierce competition for those who want to find a job and go further in the future, or at least not being left behind.

Because of that reason, in many countries, especially the developing countries, there are many young people who often remain in a vulnerable situation and lack the requisite knowledge and skills to adapt to the changing economy and social environment. Meanwhile, the education and training systems often do not match the modern labour market demands. The situation is getting worse for those who live in the conflict areas, and the migrants. As the result, the stressful feeling combined with the hopelessness easily make **them lack of orientation for the future and being out of control behaviour.**

In fact, some young people try to escape from the negative realities by spending their precious time on joining many other 'interesting things' or illegal activities, instead of taking responsibilities to the society and finding the new way for themselves. Also, the insensitivity among the youth has become the emergency in most of societies. The development of the digital technology, specifically the social media, have been making the situation get worse and worse.

Today, it is not so difficult to find the amount of young people who always get ready to waste their time in using the PCs, smartphone or tablet uselessly. There are huge gaps in the relationships among the friends in a group, or the family members, due to the 'scared silence' on every meetings or gatherings, in which everyone all busy using social media, playing games or something like that. Many others even do not want to leave their rooms, or interesting parties and games, as Holy Father said 'The comfort zone', to go out and live as a human. The spirit of teamworking as well as the motivation of dedicating for the better future, therefore, is getting lower or even disappeared in their minds.

Moreover, being out of control behaviour, maybe because of stressful feeling, many young people tend to use violence, as the unique way, to solve their problems. The scope of this issue is not only among the Asian countries, but also on the worldwide level. According to the WHO's updates, there are 200,000 homicides occur among youth 10–29 years of age each year, making it the fourth leading cause of death for people in this age group. Most of the victims are male, with up to 83 percent, higher than the amount of females in almost nations. There is a variety of reasons, for instance: Violence-related behaviors in daily lives, School Violence, Family Violence and so on.

For the development of the Catholic faith, because of the diversity in culture, especially the philosophical thoughts and religions, somehow, there are obvious obstacles for those who want to discover the beauties and back to the Church as well as live according to the teaching of the Church. On this issue, the atheism is one of the most thoughtful topics not only in some popular socialist countries like: China, North Korea or Vietnam, but also in many other developed countries, where most of population are living within the good qualities and conditions. Because, there are many educated young people, even the Catholics, do not believe in God or just consider Him as a normal philosopher, and spending time in attending the Mass is such a strange thing. Additionally, in some countries where Catholics account for a small proportion of the total population, the values of the Church's teaching are usually considered against to the national traditions by the society, especially where the Buddhism, Muslim, and Hinduism are majority. Additionally, there are also many other top concerns of the local Church in Asia, such as: **abortion, teenage pregnancy, the increasing proportion of divorces, mixed marriage**, and especially **Same-sex marriage**. All of them are damaging the teaching of the Church as well as becoming the dangerous values for the mindset of young generations.

So that, in the light of the Holy Spirit, we are looking forward to seeing an open-minded Church, which is more dynamic and youthful in considering the thoughts and demands of the young people in

each specific regions and cultures. The spiritual care should be based on the respect and patience in order to make them realize that there are not so complicated and difficult to understand and live with the Catholic faith. In other words, we need a Church not only as a Mother, but also as a friend to communicate comfortably.

For the young people, especially those who are living in the Asia, please stop asking for the incredible things or miracles from the sky to make you believe in God. Do not hesitate to make a dialog with the Church. Because there is nothing Inconsistent with your national customs and daily lives, but just love and mercy.

So what are you waiting for??? ***Just come and see and you will be stayed youthful always and be inspired by the Love of the Lord!***

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