



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY TO RIO DE JANEIRO
ON THE OCCASION OF THE XXVIII WORLD YOUTH DAY

PRESS CONFERENCE OF POPE FRANCIS
DURING THE RETURN FLIGHT

Papal Flight
Sunday, 28 July 2013

Father Lombardi:

Now, my friends, we are delighted to have the Holy Father, Pope Francis, with us on this return flight. He has been good enough to allow plenty of time to review the visit with us and to respond in complete freedom to your questions. I shall ask him to give us a brief introduction and then we will begin with the list of those who have asked to speak, and we will take them from different national groups and language groups. So, over to you, Your Holiness, for your words of introduction.

Pope Francis:

Good evening, and thank you very much. I am pleased. It has been a good journey, spiritually it has done me good. I am quite tired, but my heart is joyful, and I am well, really well: this has done me good spiritually. Meeting people does me good, because the Lord works in each one of us, he works in our hearts, and the Lord's riches are so great that we can always receive many wonderful things from others. And this does me good. So that is my first reflection. Then, I would say that the goodness, the hearts of the Brazilian people, are big, really big. They are a very lovable people, a people who like to celebrate, who even amid suffering always find a path to seek out the good somewhere. And this is good: they are lively people, and they have suffered greatly! The liveliness of the Brazilians is contagious, it really is! And these people have big hearts. Then, I would say of the organizers, both at our end and those at the Brazilian end, well! I felt as if I was sitting in front

of a computer, an incarnate computer ... no, really! Everything was timed so well, wasn't it? It was wonderful. Then, we had problems with the plans for security: security here, security there; there wasn't a single accident in the whole of Rio de Janeiro during these days, and everything was spontaneous. With less security, I could have been with the people, I could have embraced them, greeted them, without armoured cars ... there is security in trusting a people. It is true that there is always the danger of some mad person .. the danger that some mad person will do something, but then there is the Lord! But to make an armed space between the bishop and the people is madness, and I prefer the other madness: away with it! And run the risk of the other madness! I prefer this madness: away with it! Closeness is good for us all.

Then, the organization of WYD, not any particular aspect, but overall: the artistic element, the religious element, the catechetical element, the liturgical element .. it was all wonderful! They have the capacity to express themselves in art. Yesterday, for example, they did really lovely things, really lovely! Then, Aparecida: Aparecida for me was a powerful religious experience. I remember the Fifth Conference, I went there to pray, to pray. I wanted to go alone, somewhat hidden, but there was an impressive crowd! But it is not possible, as I knew before I arrived. And we prayed. I don't know ... one thing ... but on your part as well, your work, they tell me – I didn't read the newspapers during these days, I didn't have time, I didn't see the television, nothing – but they tell me that good work was done, really good work. Thank you, thank you for your collaboration, thank you for doing all this. Then the number, the number of young people. Today – I can hardly believe it – but today, the Governor spoke of three million. I cannot believe it. But from the altar – it's true! I don't know whether you, or some of you, were at the altar. From the altar, at the end of Mass, the whole beach was full, as far as the curve; more than four kilometres. There were so many young people. And they say, Archbishop Tempesta said, they came from 178 countries: 178! The Vice-President gave me the same figure, so it's certain. It is important! Amazing!

Father Lombardi:

Thank you. Now we invite Juan de Lara to speak first, from *Efe*, he is Spanish, and it is the last journey he will make with us. So we are pleased to give him this opportunity.

Juan de Lara:

Your Holiness, good evening. On behalf of all our colleagues, we want to thank you for these days that you have given us in Rio de Janeiro, for the work that you have done and the effort you have made. And also, on behalf of all the Spanish journalists, we want to thank you for your prayers for the victims of the train accident in Santiago de Compostela. Thank you very much indeed. The first question does not have much to do with the journey, but we take the opportunity that this occasion gives us, and I would like to ask you: Your Holiness, in these four months of pontificate, we see that you have created various commissions to reform the Curia. I want to ask you: what kind of reform do you have in mind, do you foresee the possibility of suppressing the IOR, the so-called

Vatican Bank? Thank you.

Pope Francis:

The steps I have taken during these four and a half months come from two sources: the content of what had to be done, all of it, comes from the General Congregations of the Cardinals. There were certain things that we Cardinals asked of the one who was to be the new Pope. I remember that I asked for many things, thinking that it would be someone else... We asked, for example, for the Commission of eight Cardinals, we know that it is important to have an outside body of consultors, not the consultation bodies that already exist, but one on the outside. This is entirely in keeping – here I am making a mental abstraction, but it's the way I try to explain it – in keeping with the maturing of the relationship between synodality and primacy. In other words, having these eight Cardinals will favour synodality, they will help the various episcopates of the world to express themselves in the very government of the Church. There were many proposals made that have yet to be implemented, such as the reform of the Secretariat of the Synod and its methodology; the Post-Synodal commission, which would have a permanent consultative character; the consistories of Cardinals with less formal agendas, canonization, for example, but also other items, etc. So the source of the content is to be found there! The second source has to do with present circumstances. I admit that it was no great effort for me, during the first month of the pontificate, to organize the Commission of the eight Cardinals, which is an initial step. The financial part I was planning to address next year, because it is not the most important thing that needed to be done. But the agenda changed on account of circumstances that you know about, that are in the public domain. Problems arose that had to be dealt with. The first is the problem of the IOR, that is to say, how to manage it, how to conceptualize it, how to reformulate it, how to put right what needs to be put right, hence the first Commission of Reference, as it is called. You are familiar with the chirograph, what the aims are, who the members are, etc. Then we had the meeting of the Commission of 15 Cardinals who follow the economic affairs of the Holy See. They come from all over the world. And then, while we were preparing for this meeting, we saw the need to make a single Commission of Reference for the whole economy of the Holy See. That is to say, the economic problem was not on the agenda when it had to be addressed, but these things happen when you're in governance: you try to go in one direction, but then someone throws you a ball from another direction, and you have to bat it back. Isn't that the way it is? So, life is like that, but this too is part of the wonder of life. I repeat the question that you asked me about the IOR, excuse me, I'm speaking Spanish. Excuse me, the answer came to me in Spanish.

Returning to the question you asked about the IOR, I don't know how the IOR will end up. Some say perhaps it would be better as a bank, others say it should be an aid fund, others say it should be shut down. Well! That's what people are saying. I don't know. I trust the work done by the IOR personnel, who are working on this, and the Commission personnel too. The President of the IOR is staying, the same one as before, whereas the Director and Vice-Director have resigned. But I don't know how all this is going to end up, and that's fine, because we keep looking and we will

come up with something. We are human in all this. We must find the best solution, no doubt about that. But the hallmarks of the IOR – whether it be a bank, an aid fund, or whatever else – have to be transparency and honesty, they have to be. Thank you.

Father Lombardi:

Many thanks, Your Holiness. So, now we move on to a person from the representatives of the Italian group, and we have someone you know well: Andrea Torielli, who is going to ask you a question on behalf of the Italian group.

Andrea Torielli:

Holy Father, I want to ask something perhaps a little indiscreet: there was a photograph that went all over the world when we set off, of you climbing the steps of the aeroplane carrying a black brief-case, and there have been articles all over the world commenting on this new departure. Yes, about the Pope climbing the steps – let's say it had never happened before that the Pope should climb on board with his own hand-luggage. So, there have been various suggestions about what the black bag contained. So my questions are these: firstly, why was it you carrying the black bag, and not one of your entourage, and secondly, could you tell us what was in it? Thank you.

Pope Francis:

It wasn't the key for the atom bomb! Well! I was carrying it because that's what I've always done. When I travel, I carry it. And inside, what was there? There was a razor, a breviary, an appointment book, a book to read, I brought one about Saint Thérèse, to whom I have a devotion. I have always taken a bag with me when travelling – it's normal. But we must be normal ... I don't know ... what you say is a bit strange for me, that the photograph went all over the world. But we must get used to being normal. The normality of life. I don't know, Andrea, whether I have answered your question.

Father Lombardi:

Now we will invite a representative of the Portuguese language to speak, Aura Miguel, who is from *Radio Renascença*:

Aura Miguel:

Your Holiness, I want to ask why you ask so insistently that people pray for you? It isn't normal, we're not used to hearing a Pope ask so often that people pray for him...

Pope Francis:

I have always asked this. When I was a priest, I asked it, but less frequently. I began to ask with greater frequency while I was working as a bishop, because I sense that if the Lord does not help in this work of assisting the People of God to go forward, it can't be done. I am truly conscious of my many limitations, with so many problems, and I a sinner – as you know! – and I have to ask for this. But it comes from within! I ask Our Lady too to pray to the Lord for me. It is a habit, but a habit that comes from my heart and also a real need in terms of my work. I feel I have to ask ... I don't know, that's the way it is ...

Father Lombardi:

Now we pass to the English language group, and we invite our colleague Mr Pullella from *Reuters*, here in front, to speak.

Philip Pullella:

Your Holiness, thank you, on behalf of the English group, for making yourself available. Our colleague de Lara has already put the question that we wanted to ask, so I will continue just a little further along the same lines: When you were seeking to make these changes, I remember you said to the group from Latin America that there are many saints working in the Vatican, but also people who are rather less saintly, didn't you? Have you encountered resistance to your wish to change things in the Vatican? Have you met with resistance? The second question is this: you live in a very austere manner, you have remained at *Santa Marta*, and so on... Would you like your collaborators, including the Cardinals, to follow this example, and perhaps to live in community, or is this something for you alone?

Pope Francis:

The changes ... the changes also come from two sources: what we Cardinals asked for, and what has to do with my own personality. You mentioned the fact that I remained at *Santa Marta*. But I could not live alone in the Palace, and it is not luxurious. The Papal apartment is not particularly luxurious! It is a fair size, but it is not luxurious. But I cannot live alone or with just a few people! I need people, I need to meet people, to talk to people. And that's why when the children from the Jesuit schools asked me: "Why did you do that? For austerity, for poverty?" No, it was for psychological reasons, simply, because psychologically I can't do otherwise. Everyone has to lead his own life, everyone has his own way of living and being. The Cardinals who work in the Curia do not live wealthy, opulent lives: they live in small apartments, they are austere, they really are, austere. The ones I know, the apartments that APSA provides for the Cardinals. Then it seems to me that there is something else I wanted to say. Everyone has to live as the Lord asks him to live. But austerity – general austerity – I think it is necessary for all of us who work in the service of the Church. There are many shades of austerity .. everyone must seek his own path. With regard to the saints, it's true, there are saints: cardinals, priests, bishops, sisters, laypersons; people who

pray, people who work hard, and who also help the poor, in hidden ways. I know of some who take trouble to give food to the poor, and then, in their free time, go to minister in this or that church. They are priests. There are saints in the Curia. And there are some who are not so saintly, and these are the ones you tend to hear about. You know that one tree falling makes more noise than a whole forest growing. And it pains me when these things happen. But there are some who create scandal, some. We have this Monsignor in prison, I think he is still in prison. He didn't exactly go to prison because he was like Blessed Imelda, he was no saint. These are scandals, and they do harm. One thing – I've never said this before, but I have come to realize it – I think that the Curia has fallen somewhat from the level it once had, in the days of the old curialists ... the profile of the old curialist, faithful, doing his work. We need these people. I think ... there are some, but not as many as there once were. The profile of the old curialist: I would say that. We need more of them. Do I encounter resistance! Well! If there is resistance, I haven't seen it yet. It's true that I haven't done much, but I would say that I have found help, and I have found loyal people. For example, I like it when people say to me: "I don't agree", and I have found this. "But I don't see that, I disagree: that's what I think, you do as you wish." This is a real collaborator. And I have found people like this in the Curia. And this is good. But when there are those who say: "Oh, how wonderful, how wonderful, how wonderful", and then they say the opposite somewhere else... I have yet to come across this. Maybe it happens, maybe there are some like this, but I'm not aware of them.. Resistance: in four months, you won't find that much.

Father Lombardi:

Well, now we pass to a Brazilian lady, as seems only right. So here is Patricia Zorzan, and perhaps Mr Izoard could come forward, so that we can have a French speaker next.

Patricia Zorzan:

Speaking on behalf of the Brazilians: society has changed, young people have changed, and in Brazil we have seen a great many young people. You did not speak about abortion, about same-sex marriage. In Brazil a law has been approved which widens the right to abortion and permits marriage between people of the same sex. Why did you not speak about this?

Pope Francis:

The Church has already spoken quite clearly on this. It was unnecessary to return to it, just as I didn't speak about cheating, lying, or other matters on which the Church has a clear teaching!

Patricia Zorzan:

But the young are interested in this ...

Pope Francis:

Yes, though it wasn't necessary to speak of it, but rather of the positive things that open up the path to young people. Isn't that right! Besides, young people know perfectly well what the Church's position is.

Patricia Zorzan:

What is Your Holiness' position, if we may ask?

Pope Francis:

The position of the Church. I am a son of the Church.

Father Lombardi:

Well, now let's return to the Spanish group, Dario Menor Torres ..., oh, excuse me, Mr Izoard, whom we have already called forward, so that we have someone from the French group – and then Dario Menor.

Antonie-Marie Izoard:

Greetings, Your Holiness, on behalf of my francophone colleagues on board – there are nine of us on this flight – for a Pope who does not want to give interviews, we are truly grateful to you. Ever since 13 March, you have presented yourself as the Bishop of Rome, with great, very great insistence. So, we would like to understand the deep significance of this insistence, whether perhaps, rather than collegiality, we are perhaps speaking about ecumenism, perhaps of your being the *primus inter pares* of the Church? Thank you.

Pope Francis:

Yes, in this, we must not go beyond what is said. The Pope is a bishop, the Bishop of Rome, and because he is the Bishop of Rome he is the Successor of Peter, Vicar of Christ. There are other titles, but the first title is "Bishop of Rome" and everything follows from that. To say, to think that this means being *primus inter pares*, no, that does not follow. It is simply the Pope's first title: Bishop of Rome. But there are others too ... I think you said something about ecumenism. I think this actually helps ecumenism. But only this ...

Father Lombardi:

Now Dario Menor from *La Razón*, from Spain:

Dario Menor Torres:

A question about how you feel. A week ago you mentioned that a child had asked you how it felt, whether someone could imagine being Pope and whether anyone would want to be Pope. You said that people would have to be mad to want that. After your first experience among a great multitude of people, such as you found during these days in Rio, can you tell us how it feels to be Pope, whether it is very hard, whether you are happy to be Pope, whether in some way your faith has grown, or whether, on the contrary, you have had some doubts. Thank you.

Pope Francis:

To do the work of a bishop is a wonderful thing, it is wonderful. The problem arises when someone seeks that work: this is not so good, this is not from the Lord. But when the Lord calls a priest to become a bishop, this is good. There is always the danger of thinking oneself a little superior to others, not like others, something of a *prince*. There are dangers and sins. But the work of a bishop is wonderful: it is to help one's brothers and sisters to move forward. The bishop *ahead* of the faithful, to mark out the path; the bishop *in the midst* of the faithful, to foster communion; and the bishop *behind* the faithful, because the faithful can often sniff out the path. The bishop must be like that. You asked me whether I like it. Yes, I like being a bishop, I like it. In Buenos Aires I was very happy, very happy! I was happy, it's true. The Lord helped me in that. But as a priest I was happy, and as a bishop I was happy. In this sense I say: I like it!

Question from the floor:

And as Pope?

Pope Francis:

Likewise, likewise! When the Lord puts you there, if you do what the Lord wants, you are happy. This is my feeling, this is how I feel.

Father Lombardi:

Now another from the Italian group: Salvatore Mazza from "Avvenire".

Salvatore Mazza:

I cannot even stand up. Excuse me, I cannot even stand up, for all the wires I have under my feet. We have seen during these days, we have seen you full of energy, even late in the evening. We are watching you now on board the aircraft which is tilting from side to side, and you are calmly standing there, without a moment's hesitation. We would like to ask you: there is talk of future

journeys. There is much talk of Asia, Jerusalem, Argentina. Do you already have a more or less definite schedule for next year, or is everything still to be decided?

Pope Francis:

Definite, nothing is definite. But I can say something of what is being planned. One thing that is definite – excuse me – is 22 September in Cagliari. Then, 4 October in Assisi. I have it in mind, within Italy, to go and visit my relatives for a day: to fly there one morning and to return the next morning, because, bless them, they call me and we have a good relationship. But only for one day. Outside Italy: Patriarch Bartholomaios I wants to have a meeting to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the meeting between Athenagoras and Paul VI in Jerusalem. The Israeli Government has also issued a special invitation to go to Jerusalem. I think the Government of the Palestinian Authority has done the same. This is what is in the pipeline: it is not quite clear whether I'm going or not going ... Then, in Latin America, I don't think there is a possibility of returning, because the Latin American Pope, his first journey is to Latin America! Enough! We must wait a little now! I think I could go to Asia, but this is all up in the air. I have been invited to go to Sri Lanka and also to the Philippines. But I must go to Asia. Because Pope Benedict did not have time to go to Asia, and it is important. He went to Australia and then to Europe and America, but Asia... Going to Argentina: at the moment I think this can wait a little, because all these journeys have a certain priority. I wanted to go to Istanbul on 30 September, to visit Bartholomaios I, but it is not possible, it is not possible because of my schedule. If we meet, it will be in Jerusalem.

Question from the floor:

Fatima?

Pope Francis:

Fatima, there is also an invitation to Fatima, it's true, it's true. There is an invitation to go to Fatima.

Question from the floor:

30 September or 30 November?

Pope Francis:

November, November: Saint Andrew.

Father Lombardi:

Good. Well, now we move to the United States, and we invite Ada Messia from *CNN* to ask you a question:

Ada Messia:

Greetings. You are coping better than I ... No, no, no, it's all right, it's all right. My question is this: when you met the young people from Argentina, maybe with tongue in cheek, maybe seriously, you told them that you too, at times, feel penned in. We would like to know what exactly you were referring to ...

Pope Francis:

You know how often I've wanted to go walking through the streets of Rome, because, in Buenos Aires, I liked to go for a walk in the city, I really liked to do that! In this sense, I feel a little penned in. But I have to say one thing and that is that these fellows from the Vatican Gendarmerie are so good, they are really, really good, and I am grateful to them. Now they're letting me do a few more things! I think... their job is to maintain security. So, penned in in that sense. I'd like to go out walking but I understand that it isn't possible: I understand. That was what I meant. Because I used to be – as we say in Buenos Aires – a *callejero*, a street priest...

Father Lombardi:

And now we call on another Brazilian: it is Marcio Campos, and I also ask Mr Guénois to come up for the next question, for the French.

Pope Francis:

I was asking what time it is, because they have to serve supper, but are you all hungry?

Background:

No, no...

Marcio Campos:

Holy Father, I want to say that whenever you miss Brazil, the joyful Brazilian people, hold onto the flag that I gave you. I would also like to thank my colleagues at the daily newspapers *Folha de São Paulo*, *Estado*, *Globo* and *Veja* for being able to represent them in this question. Holy Father, it is difficult to accompany a Pope, very difficult. We are all tired, you are going strong and we are exhausted... In Brazil, the Catholic Church has lost a number of the faithful in these recent years. Is the Charismatic Renewal movement one possible way for ensuring that the faithful do not go to

the Pentecostal Church or other pentecostal churches? Many thanks for your presence and many thanks for being with us.

Pope Francis:

It is very true what you are saying about the fall in numbers of the faithful: it is true, it is true. The statistics are there. We spoke with the Brazilian bishops about the problem at a meeting held yesterday. You asked about the Charismatic Renewal movement. I'll tell you one thing. Back at the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, I had no time for them. Once, speaking about them, I said: "These people confuse a liturgical celebration with samba lessons!" I actually said that. Now I regret it. I learned. It is also true that the movement, with good leaders, has made great progress. Now I think that this movement does much good for the Church, overall. In Buenos Aires, I met frequently with them and once a year I celebrated a Mass with all of them in the Cathedral. I have always supported them, after I was *converted*, after I saw the good they were doing. Because at this time in the Church – and here I'll make my answer a little more general – I believe that the movements are necessary. The movements are a grace of the Spirit. "But how can you control a movement which is so free?" The Church is free, too! The Holy Spirit does what he wants. He is the one who creates harmony, but I do believe that the movements are a grace, those movements which have the spirit of the Church. Consequently I don't think that the Charismatic Renewal movement merely prevents some people from passing over to pentecostal denominations. No! It is also a service to the Church herself! It renews us. Everyone seeks his own movement, according to his own charism, where the Holy Spirit draws him or her.

Question in the background:

Pope Francis:

Yo estoy cansado. I am tired.

Father Lombardi:

So, Mr Guénois from *Le Figaro*, for the French group.

Jean-Marie Guénois:

Holy Father, one question, with my colleague from *La Croix*: You have said that without women, the Church grows barren. What concrete measures will you take? For example, the diaconate for women or a woman as a head of dicastery? Also, a little technical question: you said you were tired. Have special arrangements been made for the return flight? Thank you, Your Holiness.

Pope Francis:

Let's begin with the last question. This plane doesn't have any special arrangements. I am up front, I have a nice seat, a normal one, the same as everyone else has. I had them write a letter and make a phone call to say that I did not want special arrangements on the plane: is that clear? Second, about women. A Church without women is like the college of the Apostles without Mary. The role of women in the Church is not simply that of maternity, being mothers, but much greater: it is precisely to be the icon of the Virgin, of Our Lady; what helps make the Church grow! But think about it, Our Lady is more important than the Apostles! She is more important! The Church is feminine. She is Church, she is bride, she is mother. But women, in the Church, must not only... I don't know how to say this in Italian... the role of women in the Church must not be limited to being mothers, workers, a limited role... No! It is something else! But the Popes.. Paul VI wrote beautifully of women, but I believe that we have much more to do in making explicit this role and charism of women. We can't imagine a Church without women, but women active in the Church, with the distinctive role that they play. I think of an example which has nothing to do with the Church, but is an historical example: in Latin America, Paraguay. For me, the women of Paraguay are the most glorious women in Latin America. Are you *paraguayo*? After the war, there were eight women for every man, and these women made a rather difficult decision: the decision to bear children in order to save their country, their culture, their faith, and their language. In the Church, this is how we should think of women: taking risky decisions, yet as women. This needs to be better explained. I believe that we have not yet come up with a profound theology of womanhood, in the Church. All we say is: they can do this, they can do that, now they are altar servers, now they do the readings, they are in charge of *Caritas* (Catholic charities). But there is more! We need to develop a profound theology of womanhood. That is what I think.

Father Lombardi:

For the Spanish group, now, we have Pablo Ordas, from *El País*:

Pablo Ordas:

We would like to know about your working relationship, not just your relationship of friendship but that of collaboration, with Benedict XVI. There has never been a situation like this before, and whether you are frequently in contact and if he is helping you in this work. Many thanks.

Pope Francis:

I think that the last time that there were two Popes, or three Popes, they weren't speaking to one another; they were fighting to see which was the true Pope. We ended up with three Popes during the Western Schism.

There is one thing that describes my relationship with Benedict: I have such great affection for him. I have always loved him. For me he is a man of God, a humble man, a man of prayer. I was

so happy when he was elected Pope. Also, when he resigned, for me it was an example of greatness. A great man. Only a great man does this! A man of God and a man of prayer. Now he is living in the Vatican, and there are those who tell me: "How can this be? Two Popes in the Vatican! Doesn't he get in your way? Isn't he plotting against you?" All these sorts of things, no? I have found a good answer for this: "It's like having your grandfather in the house", a wise grandfather. When families have a grandfather at home, he is venerated, he is loved, he is listened to. Pope Benedict is a man of great prudence. He doesn't interfere! I have often told him so: "Holiness, receive guests, lead your own life, come along with us". He did come for the unveiling and blessing of the statue of Saint Michael. So, that phrase says it all. For me it's like having a grandfather at home: my own father. If I have a difficulty, or something I don't understand, I can call him on the phone: "Tell me, can I do this?" When I went to talk with him about that big problem, *Vatileaks*, he told me everything with great simplicity ... to be helpful. There is something I don't know whether you are aware of – I believe you are, but I'm not certain – when he spoke to us in his farewell address, on 28 February, he said: "In your midst is the next Pope: I promise him obedience". He is a great man; this is a great man!

Father Lombardi:

Now it is the turn of a Brazilian once again; Ana Ferreira; and then Gianguido Vecchi for the Italians.

Ana Ferreira:

Good evening, Holy Father. Thanks. I would like to say any number of "thanks". Thanks for having brought so much joy to Brazil, and thanks also for responding to our questions. We journalists really like to ask questions. I would like to know, since yesterday you spoke to the Brazilian bishops about the participation of women in our Church... I would like to understand better, what this participation of us women in the Church would be like. Also, what do you think of women's ordination? What should our position in the Church be like?

Pope Francis:

I would like to explain a bit more what I said about women's participation in the Church. It can't just be about their acting as altar servers, heads of *Caritas*, catechists... No! They have to be more, profoundly more, even mystically more, along with everything I said about the theology of womanhood. And, as far as women's ordination is concerned, the Church has spoken and said: "No". John Paul II said it, but with a definitive formulation. That door is closed, but on this issue I want to tell you something. I have said it, but I repeat it. Our Lady, Mary, was more important than the Apostles, than bishops and deacons and priests. Women, in the Church, are more important than bishops and priests; *how*, this is something we have to try to explain better, because I believe that we lack a theological explanation of this. Thank you.

Father Lombardi:

Gianguido Vecchi, from *Corriere della Sera*: then I would ask Mrs Pigozzi and Nicole to come forward.

Gianguido Vecchi:

Holy Father, during this visit too, you have frequently spoken of mercy. With regard to the reception of the sacraments by the divorced and remarried, is there the possibility of a change in the Church's discipline? That these sacraments might be an opportunity to bring these people closer, rather than a barrier dividing them from the other faithful?

Pope Francis:

This is an issue which frequently comes up. Mercy is something much larger than the one case you raised. I believe that this is the season of mercy. This new era we have entered, and the many problems in the Church – like the poor witness given by some priests, problems of corruption in the Church, the problem of clericalism for example – have left so many people hurt, left so much hurt. The Church is a mother: she has to go out to heal those who are hurting, with mercy. If the Lord never tires of forgiving, we have no other choice than this: first of all, to care for those who are hurting. The Church is a mother, and she must travel this path of mercy. And find a form of mercy for all. When the prodigal son returned home, I don't think his father told him: "You, sit down and listen: what did you do with the money?" No! He celebrated! Then, perhaps, when the son was ready to speak, he spoke. The Church has to do this, when there is someone... not only wait for them, but go out and find them! That is what mercy is. And I believe that this is a *kairos*: this time is a *kairos* of mercy. But John Paul II had the first intuition of this, when he began with Faustina Kowalska, the Divine Mercy... He had something, he had intuited that this was a need in our time. With reference to the issue of giving communion to persons in a second union (because those who are divorced can receive communion, there is no problem, but when they are in a second union, they can't...), I believe that we need to look at this within the larger context of the entire pastoral care of marriage. And so it is a problem. But also – a parenthesis – the Orthodox have a different practice. They follow the theology of what they call *oikonomia*, and they give a second chance, they allow it. But I believe that this problem – and here I close the parenthesis – must be studied within the context of the pastoral care of marriage. And so, two things: first, one of the themes to be examined with the eight members of the Council of Cardinals with whom I will meet on 1-3 October is how to move forward in the pastoral care of marriage, and this problem will come up there. And a second thing: two weeks ago the Secretary of the Synod of Bishops met with me about the theme of the next Synod. It was an anthropological theme, but talking it over, going back and forth, we saw this anthropological theme: how does the faith help with one's personal life-project, but in the family, and so pointing towards the pastoral care of marriage. We are moving towards a somewhat deeper pastoral care of marriage. And this is a problem for

everyone, because there are so many of them, no? For example, I will only mention one: Cardinal Quarracino, my predecessor, used to say that as far as he was concerned, half of all marriages are null. But why did he say this? Because people get married lacking maturity, they get married without realizing that it is a life-long commitment, they get married because society tells them they have to get married. And this is where the pastoral care of marriage also comes in. And then there is the legal problem of matrimonial nullity, this has to be reviewed, because ecclesiastical tribunals are not sufficient for this. It is complex, the problem of the pastoral care of marriage. Thank you.

Father Lombardi:

Thank you. And now we have Mrs Pigozzi, from *Paris Match*, also from the French group...

Carolina Pigozzi:

Good evening, Holy Father. I would like to know if, now that you are the Pope, you still feel that you are a Jesuit...

Pope Francis:

That is a theological question, because Jesuits make a vow of obedience to the Pope. But if the Pope is a Jesuit, perhaps he has to make a vow of obedience to the General of the Jesuits! I don't know how to resolve this ... I feel a Jesuit in my spirituality; in the spirituality of the Exercises, the spirituality deep in my heart. I feel this so deeply that in three days I will go to celebrate with the Jesuits the feast of Saint Ignatius: I will say the morning Mass. I have not changed my spirituality, no. Francis, Franciscan, no. I feel a Jesuit and I think as a Jesuit. I don't mean that hypocritically, but I think as a Jesuit. Thank you.

Father Lombardi:

If you can hold out, there are still some questions. Now, Nicole Winfield, from the Associated Press, and there are ... I had a list and actually I thought you had things planned among yourselves... Anyway, Elisabetta, get in line too, sorry.

Nicole Winfield:

Your Holiness, thank you once again for coming "among the lions". Your Holiness, in the fourth month of your pontificate, I wanted to ask you to make a little tally. Can you tell us what is the best thing about being Pope, an anecdote, and what is the worst, and what is the thing that has most surprised you in this period?

Pope Francis:

I don't know how to answer that, really. Big things, major things, there just haven't been any. Beautiful things, yes; for example, my meeting with the Italian bishops was very good, very good. As Bishop of the capital of Italy, I felt at home with them. And that was good, but I don't know if it was the best. Also a painful thing, one which really touched my heart, the visit to Lampedusa. It was enough to make you weep, it did me good. When these boats arrive, they leave them several miles out from the coastline and they must come ashore alone, on a boat. And this pains me because I think that these people are victims of a world-wide socio-economic system. But the worst thing that happened – excuse me – was an attack of sciatica – really! – that I had the first month, because I was sitting in an armchair to do interviews and it hurt. Sciatica is very painful, very painful! I don't wish it on anyone! But these things: talking with people; the meeting with seminarians and religious was quite beautiful, it was really beautiful. Also, the meeting with the students of Jesuit schools was very beautiful... good things.

Question:

What surprised you most?

Pope Francis:

People, people, the good people I found. I found many good people in the Vatican. I was wondering what I could say, but that is true. I am being fair in saying this: so many good people. So many good people, so many good people, but good, good, good!

Father Lombardi:

Elisabetta, someone that you know, and also Sergio Rubini, come forward, and so now we have the Argentinians.

Elisabetta Piqué

Pope Francis, first of all, on behalf of the fifty thousand Argentinians whom I met and who told me, "You will be travelling with the Pope, so please tell him that he was fantastic, stupendous; ask him when he will come". But you already said you wouldn't be going therefore, I would like to ask you a more difficult question. Were you afraid when you saw the Vatileaks report?

Pope Francis

No! I will tell you a story about the Vatileaks report. When I met with Pope Benedict, after we had prayed in the Chapel, we were in his study and I saw a large box and envelope. Excuse me . . . Benedict said to me; "In this big box are all the statements, all that the witnesses said, everything is there. But the summary and the final judgment are in this envelope. And it says here . . ." He

had it all in his head! What intelligence! Everything memorized, everything! But no, it didn't frighten me, no. No, no. Though it is a big problem. But it didn't frighten me.

Sergio Rubín

Your Holiness, two things. The first is this: you insisted a great deal on stemming the loss of the faithful. In Brazil, you were very strong. Do you hope that this trip will contribute to people returning to the Church, to them feeling closer to the Church? And second, more informally: you loved Argentina and held Buenos Aires in your heart. The Argentinians are asking if you miss Buenos Aires a lot, riding on the bus, walking through the streets? Many thanks.

Pope Francis

I believe that a Papal trip always helps. I believe it will do Brazil good, not just because the Pope was present, but because of what happened during WYD, how the youth mobilized themselves and these young people will do great good, and maybe they will be able to help the Church a great deal. But these faithful who have left the Church, many are not happy because they know they belong to the Church. I think that this will be very positive, not only for the trip, but above all for the event. WYD was a marvellous event. And yes, at times I do miss Buenos Aires and I feel it. But I am serene about it. But I believe that you, Sergio, know me better than all the others and you are able to answer this question, with the book that you wrote!

Padre Lombardi

Now we have the Russian reporter and then there is Valentina, our senior reporter, who would like to be last.

Alexey Bukalov

Good evening, Holy Father. Holy Father, returning to ecumenism: today, the Orthodox are celebrating one thousand and twenty-five years of Christianity, and there are great festivities in many capital cities. If you would comment on this, I would be grateful. Thank you.

Pope Francis

In the Orthodox Churches, they have retained that pristine liturgy, which is so beautiful. We have lost some of the sense of adoration. The Orthodox preserved it; they praise God, they adore God, they sing, time does not matter. God is at the centre, and I would like to say, as you ask me this question, that this is a richness. Once, speaking of the Western Church, of Western Europe, especially the older Church, they said this phrase to me: *Lux ex oriente, ex occidente luxus*. Consumerism, comfort, they have done such harm. Instead, you retain this beauty of God in the

centre, the reference point. When reading Dostoevsky – I believe that for all of us he is an author that we must read and reread due to his wisdom – one senses what the Russian soul is, what the eastern soul is. It is something that does us much good. We need this renewal, this fresh air from the East, this light from the East. John Paul II wrote about this in his Letter. But many times the *luxus* of the West makes us lose this horizon. I don't know, but these are the thoughts that come to me. Thank you.

Father Lombardi

And now we close with Valentina who, having been first during the trip to Rio de Janeiro, will be the last for the return trip to Rome.

Valentina Alazraki

Your Holiness, thank you for keeping your promise to respond to our questions on this return trip ...

Pope Francis

I have made you late for dinner ...

Valentina Alazraki

It doesn't matter ... The question for all Mexicans is: when are you going to visit Guadalupe? ... But this is the question of the Mexicans ... Mine would be: you will canonize the two great Popes, John XXIII and John Paul II. I would like to know what is – according to you – the model of holiness that emerges from them both and what is the impact that these Popes have had on the Church and on you?

Pope Francis

John XXIII is a bit like the figure of the *country priest*, the priest who loves all the faithful, who knows how to care for the faithful and this he did as a Bishop, and as a Nuncio. How many baptismal certificates did he forge in Turkey to help the Jews! He was courageous, a good country priest, with a great sense of humour, and great holiness. When he was Nuncio, some did not support him in the Vatican, and when he would arrive in Rome to deliver something or to ask a question, certain offices would make him wait. But he never complained: he would pray the Rosary, say the breviary. He was meek and humble, and he always concerned himself with the poor. When Cardinal Casaroli returned from a mission – I believe it was from Hungary or from what was then Czechoslovakia, I don't remember which, though – the Cardinal went to Pope John to tell him how the mission went, in that epoch of the diplomacy of "small steps". And the Pope and

Cardinal Casaroli met – twenty days later Pope John XXIII would be dead – and as the Cardinal was leaving, the Pope stopped him: “Your Eminence – no, he wasn’t yet a Cardinal – Your Excellency, a question: are you still going to see those young people?” He asked because Cardinal Casaroli had been going to the juvenile prison in Casal del Marmo and visiting with the young people. And Cardinal Casaroli said: “Yes, yes!” “Never abandon them.” This to a diplomat, who was returning from a diplomatic mission, a very important trip, that John XXIII said: “Never abandon the young”. How great he was, how great! Then, he was also a man of the Council: he was a man docile to the voice of God, which came to him through the Holy Spirit, and he was docile to the Spirit. Pius XII was thinking of calling the Council, but the circumstances weren’t right. I believe that John XXIII didn’t think about the circumstances: he felt and acted. He was a man who let the Lord guide him. Regarding John Paul II, I would say he was “the great missionary of the Church”: he was a missionary, a man who carried the Gospel everywhere, as you know better than I. How many trips did he make? But he went! He felt this fire of carrying forth the Word of the Lord. He was like Paul, like Saint Paul, he was such a man; for me this is something great. And to canonize them both together will be, I believe, a message for the Church: these two were wonderful, both of them. Paul VI’s cause is also under way, as is the cause of John Paul I. Both are under way. One more thing that I believe I said already, but I don’t know if I said it here or elsewhere – the canonization date. One date under consideration was 8 December this year, but there is a significant problem; those who will come from Poland, some can afford to come by air, but the poor will come by bus and the roads are already icy in December, so I think the date needs to be rethought. I spoke with Cardinal Dziwisz and he suggested to me two possibilities: Christ the King Sunday this year or Divine Mercy Sunday next year. I think there is too little time for Christ the King this year, since the Consistory will be on 30 September and the end of October will be too soon. But I don’t know. I must speak with Cardinal Amato about this. But I don’t think it will be 8 December.

Question from the floor

But they will be canonized together?

Pope Francis

Both together, yes.

Father Lombardi

Thank you, Your Holiness. Who is still to come? Ilze? Then everyone will have had a turn, even more than had signed up before ...

Ilze Scamparini

I would like permission to ask a delicate question: another image that has been going around the world is that of Monsignor Ricca and the news about his private life. I would like to know, Your Holiness, what you intend to do about this? How are you confronting this issue and how does Your Holiness intend to confront the whole question of the gay lobby?

Pope Francis

About Monsignor Ricca: I did what canon law calls for, that is a *preliminary investigation*. And from this investigation, there was nothing of what had been alleged. We did not find anything of that. This is the response. But I wish to add something else: I see that many times in the Church, over and above this case, but including this case, people search for “sins from youth”, for example, and then publish them. They are not crimes, right? Crimes are something different: the abuse of minors is a crime. No, sins. But if a person, whether it be a lay person, a priest or a religious sister, commits a sin and then converts, the Lord forgives, and when the Lord forgives, the Lord forgets and this is very important for our lives. When we confess our sins and we truly say, “I have sinned in this”, the Lord forgets, and so we have no right not to forget, because otherwise we would run the risk of the Lord not forgetting our sins. That is a danger. This is important: a theology of sin. Many times I think of Saint Peter. He committed one of the worst sins, that is he denied Christ, and even with this sin they made him Pope. We have to think a great deal about that. But, returning to your question more concretely. In this case, I conducted the *preliminary investigation* and we didn't find anything. This is the first question. Then, you spoke about the gay lobby. So much is written about the gay lobby. I still haven't found anyone with an identity card in the Vatican with “gay” on it. They say there are some there. I believe that when you are dealing with such a person, you must distinguish between the fact of a person being gay and the fact of someone forming a lobby, because not all lobbies are good. This one is not good. If someone is gay and is searching for the Lord and has good will, then who am I to judge him? The Catechism of the Catholic Church explains this in a beautiful way, saying ... wait a moment, how does it say it ... it says: “no one should marginalize these people for this, they must be integrated into society”. The problem is not having this tendency, no, we must be brothers and sisters to one another, and there is this one and there is that one. The problem is in making a lobby of this tendency: a lobby of misers, a lobby of politicians, a lobby of masons, so many lobbies. For me, this is the greater problem. Thank you so much for asking this question. Many thanks.

Father Lombardi

Thank you. It seems to me that we cannot do more than we have done. We have kept the Pope too long, after he already said he was a little tired. We wish him now some time of rest.

Pope Francis

Thank you. Goodnight, have a good trip and rest well.

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