

YOUNG PEOPLE OF ASIA PACIFIC AND POPE FRANCIS

教宗方济各与亚太青年

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Abstract

Pope Francis was elected as Bishop of Rome and Head of the Catholic Church on 13 March 2013, and continued in office until his death on 21 April 2025. In this comparatively short time – a little over twelve years – Pope Francis reached out to young people throughout the world. Because he was Pope, his words were usually recorded and remain available today. This short paper will draw on his words to all youth, and his particular words to the youth of the Asia Pacific region. Surely less has been recorded of the initiatives or the response of youth, but there are some wonderful encounters, which we will include below.

A MISSION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The Asia Pacific region is not the youngest in the world: that distinction belongs to Africa. In fact, the Asia Pacific region includes some of the oldest societies: Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan feature in the top 30 of aging societies. But some which rank among the youngest, including Afghanistan, Timor-Leste, and Papua New Guinea. And there may still be large numbers of young people in comparatively older societies: the Philippines, for example, has 30 million people aged between 10 and 24.

摘要

教宗方济各 (Pope Francis) 于 2013年3月13日当选罗马主教及天主教会领袖，直至2025年4月21日去世。在这相对短暂的十二年多任期内，教宗方济各向全球青年伸出援手。因其身为教宗，其言论通常被记录并留存至今。本文将对他对所有青年的讲话，特别是对亚太地区青年的寄语为基础展开论述。尽管青年们的行动与回应记录较少，但我们仍将收录部分精彩的相遇时刻。

赋予青年的使命

亚太地区并非全球最年轻的区域——这一殊荣属于非洲。事实上，亚太地区包含部分老龄化最严重的社会：日本、韩国和台湾位列老龄化社会前30名。但同时也拥有最年轻的社会，包括阿富汗、东帝汶和巴布亚新几内亚。在相对老龄化的社会中仍可能存在大量青年人口，例如菲律宾有3000万10至24岁的年轻人。

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Writing for Radio Veritas Asia in Manila, Leahna Villajos called attention to the importance which Francis placed on young people: “Throughout his papacy, Pope Francis made it a hallmark of his mission to uplift and empower young people, seeing them not just as the future of the Church but as its vibrant present. He consistently called on the youth to be ‘protagonists of change’ and builders of a more just, compassionate, and inclusive world.” (Villajos, 2025)

Young people are listening to the Pope. One reporter sought responses from young people at Asian Youth Day in Daejeon, South Korea, in 2014. Among the young people was Para Deepak Raj, a youth from the archdiocese of Madras-Mylapore in India, who said it was very special to have the pontiff in Asia, especially for the first time during an Asian Youth Day. One of 41,000 youth present for Pope Francis' Aug. 17 Mass closing the Asian Youth Day, Raj said his presence “gives us a very special feeling that we are close to the heart of the Pope. The Church says that the youth are the future of the Church, so this is a very symbolic representation that the Church is giving a very high importance to the youth.” (Harris, 2014) Another reporter received positive responses from young people in Timor Leste. (Viera, 2024)

A key message to young people was encouragement – an encouragement based in love. For World Youth Day in Krakow (broadcast to the world) Francis said: “You, dear young man, dear young woman, have you ever felt the gaze of everlasting love upon you, a gaze that looks beyond your sins, limitation, and failings and continues to have faith in you and to look upon your life with hope? Do you realise how precious you are to God, who has given you everything out of love?” (Ellsberg, 2018, 164)

在为马尼拉亚洲真理电台的撰文中，莱安娜·维拉霍斯(Leahna Villajos)指出方济各对青年的重视：

「在整个任期内，教宗方济各将提升和赋能青年作为其使命的鲜明特征，视他们不仅是教会的未来，更是其充满活力的现在。他持续呼吁青年成为『变革的主角』，建设更公正、慈悲与包容的世界。」(Villajos, 2025)

青年们认真聆听教宗的教导。一位记者曾收集2014年韩国大田亚洲青年节参与者的反馈。来自印度马德拉斯-米拉波尔总教区的帕拉·迪帕克·拉杰表示，教宗亲临亚洲具有特殊意义，尤其是在亚洲青年节期间首次到访。作为4.1万名参加教宗方济各8月17日亚洲青年节闭幕弥撒的青年之一，拉杰说他的亲临「让我们感受到与教宗心贴心的特殊温暖。教会称青年是教会的未来，因此这次活动成为教会高度重视青年的象征性体现。」(Harris, 2014)另有一位记者获得了东帝汶青年的积极反馈。(Viera, 2024)

对青年的核心信息是鼓励——基于爱的鼓励。在克拉科夫世界青年日(World Youth Day in Krakow, 向全球转播)中，方济各说：「亲爱的青年，你可曾感受到永恒之爱的注视？这目光超越你的过错、局限与失败，始终相信你，并以希望守望你的生命。你是否意识到自己对天主何等珍贵？祂出于爱给予了你一切。」(Ellsberg, 2018, 164)

Readers will understand that Pope Francis is not a social advocate, or a political reformer. Pope Francis is a religious leader, and his core message to young people is about their relationship with God, and through that relationship, our many relationships with our neighbour and with all creation.



读者们将理解，教皇方济各并非社会倡导者或政治改革家。教皇方济各是一位宗教领袖，他对年轻人的核心信息是关于他们与上帝的关系，以及通过这种关系，我们与邻人及所有受造物的众多关系。

THE IMPORTANCE OF DIALOGUE

The last mission of Pope Francis to the Asia Pacific region concluded in Singapore, where he met with young representatives of various faiths at the Catholic Junior College. “If you dialogue as young people,” Francis said, “then you will be able to do so as citizens and as members of a community.” But Francis also had a warning for young people: Throughout history, he pointed out, “the first thing a dictatorship does is take away dialogue.” (Lubov, 2024)

In an Apostolic Exhortation to young people, Francis asked them to “go beyond their small groups and to build social friendship, where everyone works for the common good. Social enmity, on the other hand, is destructive. Families are destroyed by enmity. Countries are destroyed by enmity. The world is destroyed by enmity. And the greatest enmity of all is war. Today we see that the world is destroying itself by war... So find ways of building social friendship. It is not easy, it always means having to give something up and to negotiate, but if we do it for the sake of helping others, we can have the magnificent experience of setting our differences aside and working together for something greater. If, as a result of our own simple and at times costly efforts, we can find points of agreement amid conflict, build bridges and make peace for the benefit of all, then we will experience the miracle of the culture of

对话的重要性

教宗方济各对亚太地区的最后一次访问以新加坡为终点，他在天主教初级学院与各宗教青年代表会面。

「若你们以青年身份开展对话，」方济各说，「未来作为公民和社群成员时亦能如此。」但他也警示青年：纵观历史，「独裁政权的首要行动就是剥夺对话权。」(Lubov, 2024)

在致青年的宗座劝谕 (Apostolic Exhortation) 中，方济各要求他们「走出朋友组成的群体，建立友爱的社会，寻求共同福祉。社会上的仇恨具有破坏力。家庭被仇恨摧毁，国家被仇恨摧毁，世界被仇恨摧毁。最大的仇恨是战争。今天，我们看到世界正在遭受战争摧毁，因为人们无法坐下来好好谈话。

(……) 你们要成为有能力在社会团体塑造友爱的人。这并非易事，我们必须愿意付出，必须与人协商，但若这样做是为了众人的益处，我们将能活出求同存异的伟大经验，一起奋力追求同一的目标。这种建立桥梁的工作要求我们费尽心思，而且有时候非常劳累。可是，若我们能够在如此众多的分歧中找到共识，从而缔造有利各方的和平，这就是相遇的文化所行

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encounter. This is something which young people can dare to pursue with passion.” (Francis, 2019, para 169) Young people become accustomed to dialogue when they set out to dialogue, and Francis constantly encourages young people to “build bridges”.

The Pope did not have to travel to meet young people from the Asia Pacific region. He also spoke with young people from South Asia in a video call, and urged them to dialogue: In his introduction to the call, Pope Francis said that to build bridges “means building bridges between people, between us, which is the opposite of building walls. Walls divide people, bridges unite people.” “We shake hands, we build bridges of friendship between men and women of different cultures, because the Gospel needs to become part of our culture, evangelizing culture and spreading the Gospel,” he said. (Allen, 2023)

EXPERIENCING
A JUST WORLD

Not only did Pope Francis encourage young people to build a just world, he also desired that they should experience a just world. Francis wanted young people to be able to contribute to society through meaningful work which enables their growth. This means work which honours the individual and society. Francis condemned a world where young people are simply economic machines, trapped in a dehumanising cycle of work which only profits others. But condemnation, though needed, is not Francis’ primary message. Rather he encourages young people to themselves be the courageous agents of a new and just world.

Rather than simply exhort young people, Pope Francis also encouraged youth leadership through initiatives like *The Economy of Francesco*, a global movement uniting young economists and entrepreneurs to envision a new economic model grounded in justice, sustainability, and human dignity.

的奇迹，那是青年怀着勇气和热情所追求的」 (Francis, 2019, para 169) 当青年投身对话时，他们便逐渐习惯对话，方济各持续鼓励青年「搭建桥梁」。

教宗无需远行即可会见亚太青年。他亦通过视频连线与南亚青年交流，并敦促对话：在连线开场时，教宗方济各指出搭建桥梁「意味着在人与人之间构筑连接，这与筑墙相反。墙墙隔离人群，桥梁凝聚人心。」「我们握手，在不同文化背景的男女间搭建友谊之桥，因为福音需要融入我们的文化，这既是文化传播，也是福音传播。」 (Allen, 2023)

体验公正的世界

教宗方济各不仅鼓励青年建设公正世界，更希望他们亲身体验这样的世界。他期望青年能通过促进成长的有意义工作为社会贡献。这意味着尊重个人与社会的劳动。方济各谴责将青年沦为经济机器、使其陷入仅使他人获利、非人性化劳动循环的世界。但谴责虽必要，并非其核心信息。他更鼓励青年成为新的公正世界的勇敢推动者。

教宗方济各不仅劝勉青年，还通过诸如「方济各经济」等倡议支持青年领导力——这场全球运动汇聚年轻经济学家与企业家，共同构想根植于正义、可持续性与人性尊严的新经济模式。

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ENCOURAGING
YOUNG WOMEN

During a visit to the Philippines in 2015, the Pope spoke spontaneously to many young people, listening to their experiences, and responding. He also took the opportunity to promote the participation of young women, saying: “And the small... the small representation of women. Too small! Women have much to say to us in today’s society. Sometimes we are too “machista”; we don’t make room for women. Women are able to see things differently than men. Women can ask questions that we men just don’t get. Pay attention. She [pointing to Jun’s friend] today asked the one question that doesn’t have an answer. And she couldn’t say it in words. She had to say it with tears. So that, when the next Pope comes to Manila, there should be more women (applause).” (Francis, 2015)

The Pope returned to this theme in Papua New Guinea, during his last visit to the Asia Pacific region. He listened to women who talked about their situation in society and in the church. He also departed from his prepared text to highlight the importance of women. (White, 2024)

An important encounter with women took place in Seoul, South Korea, where the Pope chose to meet with seven women who were the victims of sexual slavery during the occupation by Imperial Japanese forces. (Tiezzi, 2014) Although these women were now very elderly, they were young at the time of their enslavement. Their presence reminds us that today young women are similarly victims and survivors of systematic rape and other sexual abuse in war.

鼓励年轻女性

2015年访问菲律宾期间，教宗即兴与众多青年交流，倾听他们的经历并做出回应。他借此机会倡导提升女性参与度：「女性代表的比例太小了！实在太小！在当今社会，女性有许多话要对我们说。有时我们过于‘大男子主义’，未给女性留出空间。女性能以与男性不同的视角观察事物，能提出男性无法理解的问题。请留心——今天她用泪水提出了那个无法用言语回答的问题。当下任教宗来到马尼拉时，应有更多女性在场。（掌声）」(Francis, 2015)

教宗在最后一次亚太之行中于巴布亚新几内亚重提此议题。他倾听女性讲述她们在社会与教会中的处境，并脱稿强调女性的重要性。(White, 2024)

一次重要会晤发生在韩国首尔，教宗选择会见七位曾遭日本帝国军队占领时期性奴役的女性受害者。(Tiezzi, 2014) 尽管这些女性年事已高，但她们受奴役时正值青春年华。她们的存在提醒我们，当年轻女性同样是战争中系统性强奸及其他性虐待的受害者和幸存者。

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He also took the opportunity to promote the participation of young women, saying: "And the small... the small representation of women. Too small! Women have much to say to us in today's society. Sometimes we are too "machista"; we don't make room for women. Women are able to see things differently than men. Women can ask questions that we men just don't get. Pay attention."

他还借此机会促进年轻女性的参与，说道：‘还有女性……女性的代表人数太少！女性在当今社会有很多话要对我们说。有时我们过于“大男子主义”；我们没有给女性留出空间。女性能够以与男性不同的方式看待事物、提出我们男性根本无法理解的问题。请注意！’

MANY ENCOUNTERS,
MANY THEMES

In this short recollection, we cannot mention every topic that has found a place in the encounters between youth and Francis. Some, including hope, peace-building, immigration, and care for our environment will be dealt with in other papers. For some other topics, there is simply not enough space here to deal with a rich and complex ministry spanning more than a decade.

Readers will understand that Pope Francis is not a social advocate, or a political reformer. Pope Francis is a religious leader, and his core message to young people is about their relationship with God, and through that relationship, our many relationships with our neighbour and with all creation. Although not present at Asian Youth Day in 2017, held in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, Francis sent a message of welcome. The Secretary of State passed on the message: The Pope, he said, "prays that young people from across Asia will listen ever more attentively to God's call and respond with faith and courage to their vocation." Looking ahead to the global World Youth Day gathering in Panama in 2019, Francis invited the youth to turn to Mary, the Mother of God as "a model of missionary discipleship, to speak to her as they would to a mother, and to trust always in her loving intercession." "In this way, as they seek to follow Christ Jesus more closely, they too, like

多元相遇，多重主题

在此简短回顾中，我们无法穷尽青年与方济各相遇中的所有议题。包括希望、和平建设、移民与环境保护等主题将由其他论文探讨。部分其他议题因篇幅所限，难以在此涵盖这跨越十余年丰富而复杂的牧职。

读者应理解，教宗方济各并非社会活动家或政治改革者。他是宗教领袖，对青年的核心信息关乎他们与天主的关系，并将这种关系延伸至我们与近邻及万物的联系。尽管未亲临2017年印度尼西亚日惹举办的亚洲青年节，方济各仍传递欢迎信息。国务卿转达了这样的讯息：教宗「祈愿亚洲青年更专注聆听天主的召唤，以信德和勇气回应圣召。」展望2019年巴拿马全球世界青年节聚会时，方济各邀请青年转向天主之母玛利亚，视她为「传教门徒的楷模，像对母亲般与她交谈，并始终信赖她慈爱的代祷。」「如此，当他们寻求更紧密追随耶稣基督时，也能如这位纳匝肋的年轻女子般真正改善世界，在历史中留下印记。」教宗说道，并降福委托青年及其家庭于玛利亚的代祷。(Catholic News Agency, 2017)

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the young woman of Nazareth, can truly “improve the world and leave an imprint that makes a mark on history,” Francis said, giving his blessing and entrusting the youth and their families to Mary’s intercession. (Catholic News Agency, 2017)

And readers will appreciate that the message of Francis for the young people of Asia Pacific, while thoughtfully attentive to the realities of life here, is not different from his messages to young people in other parts of the world.

A FINAL MESSAGE TO YOUNG PEOPLE

At Asian Youth Day in South Korea in 17 August 2014, the Pope said to the thousands of young people that the phrase “Wake up!” in the AYD theme offers a reminder of the “duty to be vigilant, not to allow the pressures, the temptations and the sins of ourselves or others to dull our sensitivity to the beauty of holiness, to the joy of the Gospel.... Young people of Asia: you are the heirs of a great testimony, a precious witness to Christ. He is the light of the world; he is the light of our lives!” Pope Francis said. Certain of Christ’s victory over death, “we can face the challenge of Christian discipleship today, in our own circumstances and time.” (Anon, 2014) These final words to youth are not an end, they are another step in a great dialogue. Readers can be certain that Pope Francis’ listening and speaking will not be forgotten when World Youth Day is held in South Korea in 2027. Now Pope Leo XIV will lead the event. It will also be the first World Youth Day to take place in Asia since Manila in 1995, as well as the first to ever be held in a Christian-minority country. (Kim, 2025)

读者亦将领会，方济各对亚太青年的寄语，虽深切关注此地现实，却与他给予世界其他地区青年的信息并无二致。

给青年的最终寄语

2014年8月17日韩国亚洲青年节上，教宗对数千青年说，青年节主题中「醒来」这句话提醒我们「保持警醒的责任，不容自身或他人的压力、诱惑与罪过削弱我们对圣德之美、福音之喜的敏锐……亚太青年：你们是伟大见证的继承者，是基督宝贵的见证人！」教宗方济各宣告，「确信基督已战胜死亡，我们能在当下的环境中应对基督徒门徒的挑战。」(Anon, 2014)这些给青年的结语并非终点，而是伟大对话中的新台阶。读者可确信，当2027年世界青年节在韩国举行时，教宗方济各的倾听与言说必将被铭记。届时教宗利奥十四世将主导盛会。这既是自1995年马尼拉世青节以来首次在亚洲举办，也是首次在基督徒占少数的国家举行。(Kim, 2025)

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