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 Fundación Acción Católica Escuela de Santidad
 Foundation Catholic Action School of Sanctity
 PIO XI

IN PREPARATION FOR THE 1ST OF NOVEMBER ALL SAINTS' DAY
 REFLECTION | TESTIMONIES | PRAYER

Do not be afraid of holiness ... Do not be afraid to set your sights higher

Friday, 30 October 2020 - online for 1h

Gaudete et Exultate 32.34



“Catholic Action: a real formation to Holiness”

Fran RAMIREZ

ACG España (Catholic Action Spain)

Hello, everyone.

Many of you may know me, I am Fran Ramirez, the responsible of the Youth Sector of General Catholic Action in Spain.

I am a layman of a parish, for some years committed by the Church to carry out this exciting task of evangelization according to the guidelines of the pastoral project of General Catholic Action, open to "all parishes" and "for all".

I share with you my experience and my witness lived during the World Youth Day held in Panama in January 2019 (How far it is already!).

Together with my friends, Emanuela from Italy and Jorge from Argentina, we were able to participate as IFCA representatives in the "Vocational Fair" held during WYD in the Omar Park in the Panamanian capital.

It was an impressive experience for me that marked me and certified, once again, that Catholic Action was and is a school of formation, a space for the participation of young people, and for all the laity, and an authentic school of holiness.

In those days a multitude of young people came to our stand: the "IFCA space", led by curiosity, attracted by Emanuela's sympathy, Jorge's smile, and Fran's merchandising, but what brought them closer was the uniqueness of the proposal, for the laity, that Catholic Action offers to all Christians from the parish.

Although the tradition of Catholic Action has long been well established, its originality continues to be valid.

In an attempt to give a more concrete expression to these experiences, I will summarize what I am trying to convey to you in three "titles":

- Catholic Action promotes the identification of Christians as "laity" within the Church:

"Is this for me?"

Many young people came to our booth in Panama and after talking to us they asked us, surprised and happy to have made a huge discovery, this question: "But... then... is this for me?"

Yes, it is... This is for you, this instrument, this process,... this gift of the Church, is for all lay Christians.

Catholic Action involves people in parishes in itineraries of faith full of life and with an authentic spirit of evangelization and transformation of our environments.

- Catholic Action proposes a process of formation in ACTION:

In the conversations I had with the young people at the IFCA stand at WYD, they expressed their joy in discovering the existence of this reality, Catholic Action, within the Church for the ongoing formation of the laity.

We Christians must be formed by action and for action in our society, but with sufficient formation to propose with seriousness, solidity, but always with joy, the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

- Catholic Action, a true school of holiness:

"Frassati, witness and point of reference for young people towards Christ."

But if I had to indicate the priority and preferential reason why WYD participants passed by our IFCA stand in Panama, I would emphasize one above the others: young people were attracted by a giant life-size photograph that we had in our stand, by Pier Giorgio Frassati.

Young people passed in front of our space and observed Pier Giorgio, recognized him full of happiness, identified themselves with his testimony and made selfies with his photograph.

Many of them did not know Catholic Action, its itinerary, its formation, its proposal for lay people in parishes to form Christians for the world... but they knew Frassati.

It was impressive to see how the young people identified the image of Pier Giorgio as that of a friend, a true witness to live the faith daily. As a reference for bringing faith into their lives...they recognized him as a young saint...they wanted to be like him.

Pier Giorgio invited young people to think that holiness is a real, possible and desirable path. It is not an unattainable and outdated goal, but a proposal of Christ for every young person. In Pier Giorgio they saw it as possible, they perceived it as real...and they desired it for their lives.

Pier Giorgio makes sure that the young people are not afraid to look upwards "Upwards! ("Towards the top")... Towards the sky!

Young people, by admiring his testimony and his example, desire to be saints.

Catholic Action can become a perfect "gymnasium" in the parish, helping the "normal" lay people living in the parish to assume their own identity, which makes possible fraternal "formation" in groups and communities of children, young people and adults, forming us for action, with a convinced gaze and a determined commitment to go out and evangelize; bringing the Good News of the joy of Jesus, to transform the world in all its areas: culture, economy, politics, family, work, sports, etc., always with the strength of the grace of faith.

For this reason we can state with great joy, but with absolute firmness, that belonging to Catholic Action is a great formation to become saints.

Thank you very much to all of you.