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FORUM INTERNAZIONALE AZIONE CATTOLICA FORO INTERNACIONAL ACCION CATOLICA INTERNATIONAL FORUM CATHOLIC ACTION

PRESS RELEASE

Beatification of Cardinal Eduardo Francisco Pironio

"I LOVED CATHOLIC ACTION VERY MUCH"

Rome, 15 December 2023

With great joy and gratitude, the International Forum of Catholic Action (Fiac), together with the Argentine and universal Church, is preparing to celebrate the beatification of Cardinal Eduardo Francisco Pironio that will take place tomorrow, 16 December, at the Basilica of Our Lady of Lujan (Argentina).

To Cardinal Pironio, in his role as President of the Pontifical Council for the Laity, the Fiac owes the support of its own constitutive project born in 1987, on the margins of the Synod of Bishops "Vocation and Mission of the Laity in the Church and in the World", in which national responsables of Catholic Action from different countries participated. "At that time, Cardinal Eduardo Pironio, Pope Francis wrote in a message to the Fiac in 2022, intuited the need to create this forum so that the life of Catholic Action would contribute to the challenge of the new evangelisation, enriched with the peculiarity of each place and culture."

"He always encouraged and supported the birth and the first steps of the Fiac," says the coordinator of the Forum and President of the Acción Católica General of Spain, Eva Fernández Mateo, "as a place of meeting, exchange of gifts, mutual collaboration and promotion of Catholic Action, and to him, today, we entrust ourselves to live our mission in the Church of the 21st century and, as he told us at the constitutive assembly in 1991, "to be guided by an authentic love of obedience to the Pope and the Pastors".

Among the five founding countries (today, the Fiac is made up of 25 member countries and 43 observer countries) is Argentina, where Pironio was, among other things, Assistant of the young people of Catholic Action in the diocese of Mercedes immediately after his priestly ordination and then National Assistant.

"I loved Catholic Action very much," the cardinal wrote in his spiritual testament.

'This phrase resonates in our hearts today as a heritage and as a commitment,' says Claudia Carbajal, current President of Catholic Action Argentina. 'His style as a close, attentive pastor, with a great ability to listen and to animate the lay vocation founded on baptism and expressed in the co-responsibility of missionary communion at the service of the Church and of our brothers and sisters, has put a seal on the DNA of our Catholic Action.

Catholic Action around the world expresses affectionate gratitude to the pastor who participated in the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and who served the Church with conciliar style in Argentina, in the Latin American Church and in the universal Church, one of the main protagonists of the post-synodal exhortation *Christifideles laici* and an active supporter of the value of the role of the laity.

"He always believed in the laity and YOUTH," emphasised Giuseppe Notarstefano, National President of Italian Catholic Action, "he encouraged us and encouraged us to work in Christ, with the strength of the Gospel, to transform the world according to the interior demand of the beatitudes, in step with the poor and in fidelity to reality, with a soul bent towards sanctity, working every day for peace. A prophet of hope who accompanies us to live these difficult times with faith in Christ and in the mystery of the Easter cross".

"The figure of Cardinal Eduardo Pironio," recalls the General Ecclesiastical Assistant of the Fiac, Msgr. Eduardo Garcia, Bishop of San Justo (Argentina), "marked my generation in a very special way; they were very difficult times and his meditations for difficult times and his invitation to hope always warmed our hearts. It is a beautiful gift that the Church recognises his holiness because he always interceded for us, for Argentineans, for vocations, with his serene, clear and profound message that touched the heart and always in every little thing made us discover the deep love for Jesus Christ'.

Today concludes the prayer triduum promoted by the International Forum of Catholic Action in preparation for tomorrow's beatification celebration, which will be broadcast live by the Canalorbe 21 broadcaster from 11.00 am (3.00 pm in Italy).

Attached:

- CS 23.12.15 FIAC in celebration for beatification Cardinal Pironio
- FIAC Newsletter for the beatification of Cardinal Eduardo Francisco Pironio
- Photo of Cardinal Pironio at the First FIAC Assembly (1994)

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