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Pilgrims Towards Infinite Beauty

The Pope recently met with 260 artists from all over the world and urged them to transmit the "authentic beauty that unlocks the yearning of the human heart."

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In his address to artists on November 21 in the Sistine Chapel, the Pope urged them to transmit the "authentic beauty that unlocks the yearning of the human heart, the

profound desire to know, to love, to go towards the Other."

"You are the custodians of beauty: thanks to your talent, you have the opportunity to speak to the heart of humanity, to touch individual and collective sensibilities, to call forth dreams and hopes, to broaden the horizons of knowledge and of human engagement," Benedict XVI said.

"Be grateful, then, for the gifts you have received and be fully conscious of your great responsibility to communicate beauty, to communicate in and through beauty! Through your art, you yourselves are to be heralds and witnesses of hope for humanity! And do not be afraid to approach the first and last source of beauty, to enter into dialogue with believers, with those who, like yourselves, consider that they are pilgrims in this world and in history towards infinite Beauty! Faith takes

nothing away from your genius or your art: on the contrary, it exalts them and nourishes them."

Fighting against the slavery of selfishness

"Too often, though, the beauty that is thrust upon us is illusory and deceitful, superficial and blinding, leaving the onlooker dazed; instead of bringing him out of himself and opening him up to horizons of true freedom as it draws him aloft, it imprisons him within himself and further enslaves him, depriving him of hope and joy.

"It is a seductive but hypocritical beauty that rekindles desire, the will to power, to possess, and to dominate others, it is a beauty which soon turns into its opposite, taking on the guise of indecency, transgression or gratuitous provocation."

Benedict XVI said that it was not by chance that this encounter with artists was taking place in the Sistine Chapel, "one of the most extraordinary creations in the entire history of art."

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