

The Prelate with UNIV 2019 Students

Monsignor Fernando Ocáriz had several catechetical get-togethers with the university students in Rome during Holy Week for UNIV 2019.

04/24/2019

The university students in Rome for UNIV 2019 have taken part in the traditional Wednesday audience with the Pope in Saint Peter's Square ([link to the full text of the Holy Father's address](#)). Pope Francis also said at the end: "I greet the participants in

the UNIV 2019 meeting. Dear young people, strive during these days of formation to follow the example of Saint Josemaría. Ground your life on the values of the faith, so that by changing yourselves through Christ's example, you can change the world around you.”

“Tomorrow the Paschal Triduum begins, the summit of the entire liturgical year. May Christ's Paschal Mystery lead you to reflect on the love Christ has for you. May He help you to make his sentiments your own and to share them with your neighbor.”

Like other years during Holy Week, students from over a hundred universities around the world are meeting in Rome for UNIV 2019, an international gathering that makes it possible to spend Holy Week and Easter close to the Pope.

This year, the organizing committee has decided to reflect on the topic “Getting down to business: The transformative power of work.” The young people attending will consider social, economic and cultural problems related to the world of work, and seek solutions that respect human dignity and the fundamental rights of the human person.

On Wednesday April 17, the young men and women will have the opportunity to take part in the General Audience with the Holy Father.

Referring to this year’s topic, the president of UNIV 2019, Casimir Kouassi, an economist from Ivory Coast, said: “Information technology, the evolution of social demography and globalization are some of the factors that are shaping the future of work.”

“One-way careers,” he continued, “are being replaced by multifaceted professional careers. Personal abilities and skills, such as critical thinking, resilience, problem solving and decision-making, are increasingly valued above technical knowledge.”

These are the challenges, Kouassi said, that the congress will reflect on: “The professional man or woman of the 21st century is serious, dedicated, diligent, creative, transforming... What type of personal development does a worker need today to transform needs into opportunities and vulnerabilities into strengths? How does work become a true service to society? What can a person contribute that a robot cannot? The challenges we young people face are many, but so are the possibilities.”

UNIV 2019 will offer activities in various places in Rome: conferences,

symposiums, exhibitions, round-tables with speakers such as Olivia Darby, co-founder of the Wonder Foundation ; Luis Felipe Martí Borbolla, doctor in Constitutional Law and specialist in the history of the political ideas from Queen's College (Oxford) and in Political Strategy from the London School of Economics; Carla de Vanegas, creator of the project JOVEN360 that has been presented at the World Youth Economic Forum and replicated in other countries; Kevin Majeres, professor at Harvard Medical School, co-founder of OptimalWork ; Paloma Cantero, CEO at YouthProAktiv, an expert in international relations and one of the leading figures in Europe in Law and Politics, according to Forbes magazine in 2017; and Sharif Younes, co-founder of OptimalWork, who worked as a software engineer and data scientist in several technology startups in the Boston area.

Another activity held during this week is the Forum Incontro Romano, whose topic this year is “the wonder of daily life,” as well as the Social Innovators Project, an initiative dedicated to the presentation of volunteer and solidarity projects where university students are the protagonists.

The UNIV meetings were born in 1968 under the inspiration and impulse of Saint Josemaría Escrivá, founder of Opus Dei. During these 51 years, more than 100,000 university students have taken part. Each year the students attend the audience with the Pope, this year being particularly significant given the recently published apostolic exhortation of Pope Francis “Christus Vivit,” fruit of the Synod on young people held last October.

The Prelature of Opus Dei organizes activities of spiritual formation

during the week. It is also an opportunity to get to know the city of Rome and visit sites connected to the history of the Church in the first centuries.

For more information about UNIV 2019 see:

www.univcongress.info

www.univforum.org

pdf | document generated automatically from <https://opusdei.org/en-za/article/univ-2019-in-rome/> (01/23/2026)