

# YOUTHFUL HUMANISM

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**P**ope Francis has expressed the wish to come to Bologna on what he has called the “Sunday of the Word”.

We read in the first pages of the Bible that in the beginning “God said, ‘Let there be light’, and there was light”, and that in six days he created the heavens and the earth with all its marvels. He made man and woman in his own likeness, blessed them and told them to be fruitful, increase in number and take care of the universe he had created. “And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.”

The seventh day is Saturday. Working backward, we realize that the first day of the creation was a Sunday: the first Sunday of the Word!

The immensity of the universe and nature’s infinite secrets open our minds to the wisdom that all cultures have in common in their search for truth and righteousness.

There could be no better day than the ‘Sunday of the Word’ on which to open an exhibition of books for children from every corner of the world who want to live in a world without war or false illusions; who wish to see the earth as it was created – a marvellous garden where the lion lies down with the lamb.

The word of God is not just a sound or noise but creative energy. What He pronounces comes about.

We too, when we want to make friends, use words to confide our innermost secrets to others. Pope Francis has let us know his greatest aspirations: kindness, exchange, looking after our common home, joy, peace ... The books in this exhibition give resonance to these words. They are seeds destined to become fruit-bearing trees providing a nesting place for birds and restorative shade to men.

My thanks and blessing to all those who have contributed to giving young people a book to help them become worthy adults.