

**Message of the Apostolic Nuncio in Croatia to the participants in the  
Summer School "Practicing Resilience. Preparing for Recovery "  
Dubrovnik, June 30, 2022**

Dear Rector Tanjić,

professors and students participating in the Summer School "*Practicing Resilience. Preparing for Recovery* " held in Dubrovnik from 26 June to 8 July p.v.

Have a nice day!

Not being able to come to greet you personally, I am sending you this short message of greetings and best wishes.

The title you have chosen is full of optimism and it is just what we need in this period where we are led, with a thousand good reasons, to despair and hopelessness.

Just this morning, I unintentionally found an article by a dear friend of mine, the Apostolic Nuncio to the European Union, H.E. Archbishop Aldo Giordano, who died of Covid 19, after two months of fighting against the virus, last December 2 at the age of 67.

By training he was a theologian and philosopher and then became a diplomat of the Holy See, almost by accident.

For his studies, but also because of some experiences, he had deepened the problem of suffering and the light that Christianity gives to this mystery.

The sudden and tragic departure for heaven of one of his classmates, just ordained a priest, which took place a week before the priestly ordination of Bishop Aldo himself, will be a first, fundamental occasion that will make him reflect a lot on these issues.

In an autobiographical passage, reported in the preface to a book he wrote in 2013 entitled "*Another Europe is possible! Christian ideals and perspectives for the old continent*", ("Un'altra Europa è possibile! Ideali cristiani e prospettive per il vecchio Continente", San Paolo, 2013), referring to this friend, writes: "*On Thursday (it was July 26, 1979, ed) we celebrated his funeral and on Saturday of the same week (July 28, ed) I was ordained a priest. In those days, perhaps for the first time in such a serious way, I questioned myself about faith, about the existence of God, about Providence, about Heaven, and I told myself that if I hadn't had a*

*convincing answer to these questions I could still, and perhaps I should had, give up becoming a priest. I had the grace to hear inside me like a voice that confirmed me: God exists and is love, the resurrection is true, Heaven exists and being a priest is, above all, being made witnesses of this great and good news. So, I became a priest”.*

But if being a witness to the love of God and the Resurrection of Jesus is the main mission of every priest, it must also be that of every Christian, in particular of those who study theology motivated by the discovery and the faith that death is not the last word, because Christ has conquered death.

Don't be fooled into finding the answer to your questions in the studies. It is Christ himself who speaks within you. The study will be necessary to confirm what the heart has already suggested to you, what the mind has already intuited.

The certainty in God's love, faith in the Resurrection, the hope of Eternal Life, the cross as a passage and not as a fatality, are not the result of hours and hours of studies, but are the light that lights up in those who meet a living person: Risen Jesus.

These passages that I have just mentioned, were the themes, frequently recurring, in the priestly ministry of Archbishop Aldo who will often have to deal with the drama of the death, often premature, unexpected, of friends or relatives.

In his preaching and in his ministry, made up of thousands of encounters and relationships, both occasional relations and cultivated and consolidated friendships, he will often find himself encouraging resilience and preparing himself and many others for the recovery of hope.

Aldo liked to say that it is necessary to look beyond the horizon, since he was certain that reality is not limited to what we see, to appearances, but that God's love makes us see even where we, alone, cannot reach.

"He will precede you to Galilee" (Mk 16,7) was his episcopal motto, chosen because he believed that Jesus, as he had preceded the Apostles in Galilee to confirm them in the faith of his Resurrection, also helps us, in our doubts, in our disbelief. He, going through the tragedy of an unjust and cruel death, gave sense to the absurd and, by rising again, laid the foundations for all resilience.

I wish you, in these days of reflection and in such a particular moment for the situation that many of you are experiencing and, by participation, all of us, that this summer study of theology will help you to go further, with an unshakable faith in love of God, knowing that Jesus always precedes us.

For this I wish you an abundance of the Holy Spirit as I greet you cordially.