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Audience with participants in the Euromoot of the International Union of the Guides and Scouts of Europe (UIGSE)

At 10.45 this morning, in the Paul VI Hall, the Holy Father Francis received in audience the participants in the Euromoot, an international gathering attended by boys and girls aged from 16 to 21 from twenty nations, belonging to the International Union of the Guides and Scouts of Europe (UIGSE). The Euromoot, taking place from 27 July to 3 August, followed historical itineraries in various regions of Italy.

The following is the Pope's address to those present:

Address of the Holy Father

Dear friends, good morning and welcome!

I thank Cardinal Angelo Bagnasco for his words, and I also thank all of you because you are here, and because you have made a long journey to arrive here! You have come very far. You must certainly be a bit tired. One thing I am sure of: that inside, you feel freer than before. I am sure of this. And what does that tell us? That freedom is won by journeying, it cannot be bought at the supermarket. It is won by journeying. Freedom does not come to us closed up in our rooms with our mobile phones, nor does it come by getting a bit high to avoid reality. No, freedom comes to us on the move, step by step, together with others, never alone.

You had five phases in your journey, five encounters with great saints who in different ages travelled through Europe: Paul of Tarso, Benedict of Norcia, Cyril and Methodius, Francis of Assisi and Catherine of Siena. These people, these saints, what did they have in common? They did not wait for something from life or from others, but trusted in God and risked, they put themselves in play, on a journey to realize dreams so great that after centuries they have done good also to us, to you, to everyone. They gave their life, they did not keep it for themselves. So, after these five encounters, I would like to leave you a few words. You have had five encounters, I would like to leave you five words [*in Italian*]. Not mine, but from the Gospel that accompanied you on your journey, and which I invite you to keep with you always, as your navigator – the Gospel is the true

navigator for the road of life – and to open it every day, because the Gospel is the map of life. Here are Jesus' words, they are a few words, easy to remember: "Give and it will be given to you" (Lk 6: 38). Few words, but an entire message, a programme for life. Simple words, that draw a clear route. *Give and it will be given to you.*

First of all, *Give*. Today we think immediately of having. So many live with the solo aim of possessing what they like. But they are never satisfied, because when you have one thing you want another, and then yet another, and it carries on like this, without end. There is no satiety in having. Having more provokes more hunger, more desire to have, without finding what is good for the heart. The heart is trained not by having, but by giving. Having fattens the heart, makes it heavy, makes it worldly. Giving makes it lighter. It is a form of training to be done every day. Therefore Jesus set as a starting point not having, but giving: give, that is, start to put your life in play! Giving means getting up from your armchair, from the comfort that makes you wrapped up in yourself, and starting to walk. Giving means not submitting to life, but entering the field, to give some goodness to the world. Please, do not leave your life on the bedside table, to not be satisfied with seeing it pass by on the television, do not believe that it will be the next app that you download that will make you happy. "Our best dreams are only attained through hope, patience and commitment, and not in haste" (Apostolic Exhortation *Christus vivit*, 142). God will accompany you in this journey and supports you, so that you give your best. There is also another thing in the desire to have: alienation. You lose your originality and become a photocopy. But God created each one of us original, with our own name. Let us not make our originality – as that sixteen-year-old boy Carlo Acutis said – into a photocopy. How many young people today, it is sad to say, are photocopies, have lost their originality and copy the identity of any other originality. You say, "Fine, I will give the best of myself, but there is so much indifference around, so many people think only of themselves. Won't I end up looking naïve and losing out, and by giving become a naïve person who everyone will laugh at?" I would like to say to you: trust in Jesus. Trust in Jesus. After saying "give", He adds "and it will be given to you". God is the Father and He will give you what you imagine. God does not leave you empty-handed. When it seems that He is taking something from you, it is only to make space to give you what is better, to let you advance on your path. He frees you from the false promises of consumption to liberate you inwardly. Jesus makes you happy on the inside, not the outside. Jesus does not give you a cosmetic makeover, no: He makes the reality inside, He makes you beautiful on the inside, He makes you beautiful on the inside! Not on the outside. He gives you what nothing else can give you; because the latest smartphone, the fastest car or the most fashionable outfit, aside from never being enough, will never give you the joy of being loved and also the joy of loving. And this is the true joy: feeling that you are loved, and loving.

So, the first thing, to give. It is the secret of life. Do you know why? Because life is a special thing: "I want to possess life, to own my life. What must I do?" Life can be possessed only by giving it, by giving it. In this way you can possess your life! But you can say, "Even if I give the best of myself, reality will not change for the better". It is not true. Do you know why? Because you are unique. Because no-one in the world can give to the world what you are called to give. Someone said the same thing to Mother Teresa of Calcutta: "But you, sister, you do these things with the poor, with the sick... You do so many beautiful things... But what use is this in a world so pagan, so atheist, so evil, with so many wars?" And she replied, "One more drop in the sea. If I do not give it, no-one will". No-one can give what I, unique, can give. No-one in the world can give what you are called to give! Each one of us is unique and – please never forget this – precious in the eyes of God. For the Church you are precious, for me you are precious. I would like to say to each one of you: for me you are precious. For God you are precious. It would be nice if from the heart you were to say it every time you are together, to each person, from the heart: "You are precious, you are precious...". This is giving. Jesus' invitation, *Give and it will be given to you*, applies also in relation to others. I like to think of what, in scout jargon is called *departure*, that is, the moment in which you decide to make service your style of life. Opening up to the other, living to do good to the other, living – to use your words – the *brotherhood of scouts*. If you live in this way, *it will be given to you*. Yes, because if you build bridges towards others you will see the others lay down those bridges to you. When instead you stay alone looking into the air, lost in your own fantasies, you live in soap bubbles. But a life that is spent wandering in the air evaporates instead of going ahead. Look at your hands, made to build, to serve, to donate and to give to others, and say to yourselves, "I care, others matter to me".

Give and it will be given to you applies also in relation to creation. If we continue to exploit it, it will teach us a terrible lesson. We are already seeing this. If we take care of it, we will have a home tomorrow too. In your journey you were immersed in nature. Beautiful! Did you notice that creation has no borders? Creation has no

borders: it is of and for everyone. The plants, the woods, the animals grow without confines, without border controls. Creation is an open book that gives us a valuable teaching: we are in the world to encounter others, to create communion, because we are all connected. Creation is made to connect us with God and among ourselves, it is God's social network. But if we start out with preconceived ideas about others, fixed ideas, we will always see limits and barriers. If instead we start by encountering the other, with his history, with his reality, we will discover a brother with whom we inhabit the common home, with whom we inhabit the creation that has no frontiers.

Dear friends, you have walked this far following the motto *Parate viam Domini*. I encourage you to prepare the way of the Lord wherever you may be. The way of the Lord is easy to recognize: it is the one that has giving as its direction, that makes the world go ahead: not possession, which makes us turn back. Do not forget: possession is like this. Giving is like that. Possession makes you turn back. Giving makes you go ahead. By choosing the road of giving, you become *active citizens*, as your founder Baden Powell used to say. It is so important, today: the Lord does not seek people only for their goodness – not only this – but the Lord seeks people who do good! Love for Europe too, which you have in common, does not require merely attentive observers, but active builders: builders of reconciled and integrated societies, that give life to a renewed Europe; not a protector of spaces, but a generator of encounters. Europe needs to encounter herself. You, the *rovers* and *guides* of all Europe, have this historic task. With your journey and your dreams, you are already forging the European spirit. On the badge of all scouts there is a lily. It is the symbol that points north on the compass and also on the ancient nautical maps. Remember that scouting seeks to form men and women who open the road on High and maintain the correct route, that of goodness. Do not forget: give, always in this way, going ahead; not with the desire to possess that always holds you back. "Give and it will be given to you". It will be giving that fulfils your desire. I hope, dear guides and rovers of Europe, that you will clear the way for the path of giving, that you will clear this path of the gift, of giving. *Give and it will be given to you*. Thank you. I ask you to pray for me and I wish you a good journey!
