

POPE URGES NEW ANSWERS FOR TODAY'S PROBLEMS

Says Youth in Particular Need Reasons for Hope

VATICAN CITY, JAN. 28, 2010 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- Benedict XVI is inviting members of the Pontifical Academies to give "adequate" and "creative" answers to the problems posed by contemporary culture, always taking recourse to "the riches of the Christian tradition."

It is particularly necessary to "offer values" to the youth who are growing up in a society dominated by "relativism" and "subjectivism," he said today upon receiving in audience some 300 representatives of the academies who met Wednesday in Rome for their annual public session.

The institutions represented included the Academy of St. Thomas Aquinas, the Theological Academy, the Academy of Mary Immaculate, the International Marian Academy, the Academy of Fine Arts and Literature "dei Virtuosi al Pantheon," the Roman Academy of Archaeology and the "Cultorum Martyrum" Academy.

Recalling that today is the feast day of St. Thomas Aquinas, Benedict XVI invited the members and experts of the academies to "trust in the possibility of human reason," maintaining fidelity to the "deposit of the faith," when it comes to addressing the questions posed by the dialogue with cultures.

"It is necessary that the Pontifical Academies be today more than ever vital and lively institutions, capable of perceiving acutely both the questions of society and cultures, as well as the needs and expectations of the Church," he said.

The objective of the Pontifical Academies' work should be to "promote, with all the energies and means at their disposition, an authentic Christian humanism," explained the Pontiff. "Contemporary culture, and even more so believers themselves, continually solicit the reflection and action of the Church in different realms in which new problems arise and which also constitute sectors in which you work."

These sectors, explained Benedict XVI, are "philosophical and theological search; reflection on the figure of the Virgin Mary; the study of history, of monuments, of the testimonies received in heritage by the faithful of the first Christian generations, beginning with the martyrs; the delicate and important dialogue between the Christian faith and artistic creativity."

In this connection, he invited the academics to "offer a qualified, competent and passionate contribution, so that the whole Church, and in particular the Holy See, can have at their disposal occasions, languages and adequate means to dialogue with contemporary cultures."

Thus the Church will be able to "respond effectively to the questions and challenges that it faces in the various areas of human knowledge and experience."

Youth

In particular, Benedict XVI expressed his concern for young people, whose formation is weakened because of the loss of values of Western societies.

"As I have said many times, today's culture is strongly weakened, both by a vision dominated by relativism and subjectivism, as well as by methods and attitudes at times superficial and even trivial," he affirmed.

This cultural superficiality, the Pontiff noted, "harms the seriousness of research and reflection and, consequently, also dialogue, comparison and inter-personal communication."

Hence, the Pope affirmed that it is necessary to "again create the essential conditions of a real capacity of deepening study and research, so that there is rational dialogue and different problems are addressed effectively, in the perspective of common growth and of a formation that promotes man in his integrity and completion."

This "lack of ideal and moral reference points" affects "civil coexistence and above all the formation of young generations," he warned.

Benedict XVI said that it is necessary to make "an ideal and practical offer of values and truths, of strong reasons for life and hope, which can and must interest all, especially young people."