

**National Youth Forum on “Youth, Faith and Vocational Discernment”  
On Canada’s Salt and Light Television – October 22, 2017  
With the participation of Pope Francis and Cardinal Kevin Farrell**

A nationally televised youth forum on the theme of “Youth, Faith and Vocational Discernment” will air on Canada’s Salt and Light Catholic Television Network on Sunday evening, October 22, 2017. Taped in “Fr. Michael McGivney Studios” of the Salt and Light Catholic Media Broadcast Centre in Toronto on October 10, 2017, the 90-minute program is hosted by **Cardinal Kevin Farrell**, Prefect of the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life and Salt and Light founding CEO, **Fr. Thomas Rosica, CSB**. Pope Francis took part in the program by sending a special video for the occasion in which he addressed young Canadians “from the Atlantic to the Pacific” and reminded them that they are the protagonists of this unique dialogue in preparation for the 2018 Synod of Bishops set to take place in October 2018 at the Vatican.

The Canadian youth forum, the first ever to take place in Canada, featured audiences of young people in Vancouver, British Columbia; Calgary, Alberta; Windsor, Ontario; Toronto, Ontario; Montreal and Québec City in the Province of Quebec. Young people in each audience represented the world of senior high school and university students, and young adults from many different walks of life and professions including candidates for consecrated life and ordained ministry. Many were involved in youth and young adult ministries and others from university chaplaincies across Canada. Some had little association with the Church. The forum took place in English and French, the official languages of Canada. In the weeks prior to the forum, participants worked with their pastoral ministers, chaplains and guides in reflecting on Pope Francis’ January 2017 letter to Youth that announced the upcoming Synod of Bishops on “Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment,” released by the Synod of Bishops last January 2017. Many participants had studied the Synodal Preparatory Document in advance of the television forum.

In the Holy Father’s letter to young people earlier this year, and again in a very stirring address to youth in Rome on the eve of Palm Sunday 2017, Pope Francis made it clear that that he wants to hear the voices of all young adults, including Catholics as well as atheists, agnostics and those estranged from the church.

“Every young person has something to say to others, something to say to adults, something to say to priests, to sisters, to the bishops and to the pope.”

In his very animated address to young Canadians during the national forum, Pope Francis praised “the marvels of technology that, if used positively, provide an opportunity for encounter and exchange unthinkable until recently.”

The Holy Father encouraged young people in Canada to be “weavers of relationships signed by trust, by sharing, by openness even to ends of the world. Do not raise walls of division: do not raise walls of division! Build bridges, like this extraordinary one that you are crossing in spirit, and that links the shores of two oceans. You are experiencing a moment of intense preparation for the next Synod – the Synod of Bishops – that concerns you in a particular way, just as it involves the whole Christian community.”

Throughout the 90-minute television program, young people from each part of Canada offered reflections, posed questions and shared their hopes for the 2018 Synod with Cardinal Farrell and Pope Francis. In each city, a young producer of Salt and Light Television facilitated the conversation and allowed a real dialogue to take place with the studio audience in Toronto and Cardinal Farrell. The Quebec delegation also enjoyed the presence of Cardinal Gérald Cyprien Lacroix, Archbishop of Québec City and Primate of the Church in Canada.

“It’s your moment; it’s your time,” Cardinal Kevin Farrell told participants in the Canadian forum. “The whole church is saying to you, the pope is saying to you: Don’t allow the world to control you; you control the world.”

When it comes to evangelizing, Cardinal Farrell said young people themselves should consider how they can reach out to their peers, holding up social media as an area where they would be more effective than what he called “the elders” of the church.

“If Saint Paul were around today, where would he be? He’d be an expert on [Twitter’s] 140 characters. And that’s where you should be,” he said.

“The Holy Father wants us to change the world,” Cardinal Farrell said. “Make a difference. Don’t let the world control you; don’t let it drag you down. But you tell us how we can help you to improve it and to make it better.”

Cardinal Farrell also reminded youth across Canada that the 2018 Synod of Bishops bishops' will be an extension of the synods in 2014 and 2015. During those meetings, bishops addressed the challenges of modern family life. Those discussions led to the publication of the Apostolic Exhortation "Amoris Laetitia," that urges priests and ministers to reflect on how they provide pastoral care to families.

Airing on Canada's Salt and Light Television on Sunday evening, October 22, 2017 at 7:30PM & 11:30PM ET / 4:30PM & 8:30PM PT, the program will also be live streamed on the Salt and Light website. The program will be repeated at 9:00 pm and 1:00 am in French.

The Holy Father's video message to Canada will be released on Sunday evening at 7:30 pm ET. For more information, please visit the extensive coverage of the National Youth Forum at <https://saltandlighttv.org/ypfdforum2017> or <http://seletlumieretv.org/jfdforum2017/>

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Fr. Thomas Rosica, CSB  
CEO, Salt and Light Catholic Media Foundation  
October 16, 2017