

## News

## Special Event “Let’s Speak to the Pope Francis”

[HOME](#) / [Information](#) / [News](#) / Special Event “Let’s Speak to the Pope Francis”, an opportunity for students to have video conference with the Pope to ask questions face to face

NEWS

2018.01.12

Special Event “Let’s Speak to the Pope Francis”, an opportunity for students to have video conference with the Pope to ask questions face to face



On Dec 18 2017, more than 700 including Sophia students, faculty members and staffs gathered for a special event “Let’s Speak to Pope Francis”. Students were able to ask questions to the pope in person in the video conference setting and it was broadcasted live via YouTube. Pope Francis is the first Pope who was a former member of Society of Jesus, an establishing organization of Sophia University. Such an event was made possible with the positive response of the Pope to the request of Professor Juan Haidar.SJ who had a personal tie from their time together at the seminary in Argentine.

In opening speech, President Yoshiaki Terumichi addressed “I find it very meaningful for this many people in Catholic spirit to gather here today to meet the Pope and listen to his talk. I hope you will share his message with the spirit of “For others with others” with as many people.”



Faculty of Foreign Studies, Department of Hispanic Studies, Asami Kobayakawa commented, “Now I understand the issues of environment and poverty is closely related. Self-centered egoism must be overcome. As a member of developed country I would like to allow myself to gain a new perspective taking a step back from the economic oriented mindset.”

A winner of essay contest hosted by “Commemorating 75 years of Anniversary of Japan and Vatican Diplomatic Relation Project”, Rintaro Ishii from Rokko Gakuin High School who departed to Vatican in the evening after the event spoke “Despite of my expectation for someone as grand as him the Pope was very friendly and easy to speak to. If I were to meet the Pope again in Vatican I would like to introduce Japanese old saying “a meeting by chance is due to fate” and share my belief that it is possible for everyone around the world to understand each other.” At last everyone celebrated the Pope’s birthday by singing Christmas carol “Angel We have Heard on High” and “Happy Birthday” in Spanish.

[Click here for NHK World coverage](#) : 

## Dialogues between the Pope and students

■Naoko Yoshida (Faculty of Theology): “What was a happiest moment after you were chosen to become the Pope?”

The Pope : “My joy is unlimited. I cannot select one to claim the best. Greeting and speaking to everyone, meeting children, elderlies and also people who are unwell give me a great joy. Encounters with people make me feel young and it is the reason for my joy.”

■Mitsuru Toyoda (Graduate School of Science and Technology)

“In the modern society it is claimed that we must survive the era of globalization and the education is crucial in order to succeed. What is the most important factor for college education from your perspective?”

The Pope: “Dangers are hidden not only behind the competitive business arenas but in the educational fields. If education enhances students to chase only successes, personal growth cannot be expected instead retrograde. Education with compassion will allow students to excel. Intelligence, emotion and communication must be harmonized. Also education must serve for common goods. Sophia University promotes the educational spirit to serve others and I find it wonderful.”

■Reina Saito (Faculty of Science and Technology)

“What is your hopes and concerns for the youth today?”

The Pope “Young people shall not be too comfortable to stay still. Stay active, respect your roots, stay optimistic and make challenges, it is my hope. However young people own the energy to move forward with the force. Due to such a nature histories and roots are neglected by them time to time I feel it is my concern. The root includes your culture, histories, family and humanity. Please watch Kurosawa movie “Rhapsody in August”. It is a good movie featuring dialogues between a young person and an elderly reflect upon their roots. Please know if no roots then there is nothing to support identities. Communicate with elderly since you will most likely find them with roots.”

■Kyaw Thuaung (Graduate School of Global Environment Studies)

“In today’s world what is the importance of religions?”

The Pope: “Your question must originate from Myanmar’s multi religious background, your home country. I believe religions had not been created like a show on the stage but it has always been within us. Religion is more than physical state since it is about one’s recognition of God together with pursuits of self-reflection. Religions can contribute in growth of individuals however it must stand for others otherwise it isn’t religious. If being religious and asking for something in return then it is hypocrisy. Fundamentalism is not based upon religious teaching but small groups established with political aims causing terrorisms. True religions allow maximum growth of people never the harms. If religions were to cause any harm then that is mere hypocrisy.”

■Asahi Kobayakawa (Faculty of Foreign Studies)

“In the encyclical “Laudato Si” addresses today’s world issues are very complexed. For decreasing poverty and sustaining environment what is needed do you think?”

The Pope : “Today our environmental problems are sever to the extent our choices are whether to tackle with all our effort or to face total destruction. I am more than overwhelmed to hear in 20 years islands in South Pacific will demolish due to the global warming or flights will be possible to fly over North Pole during the summer season. Causes of our environmental issues are based upon our economic/financial driven society allowing developments without considerations for our environment. For instance in my home country Argentine, in maximizing efficiency, extensive productions of single farm product exhaust the soil resulting in farm land to become no longer capable to grow any farm products. Such a matter also leads to rural depopulation. Eventually our economic supremacy will lead to war. People must respect our nature. As how the environment and the society are considered together in the encyclical, “Laudato-si”, wellbeing of the environment and our society cannot be detached.”

■Michiko Kira (Sophia University Junior College Division)

“Many hold good impression of you. Would you tell us of your self-image?”

The Pope : “Your question may be regarding to esthetics more than Humanities, your area of study. The mirror reflects your physical figure at first, then people eventually start dialogues with reflected selves and some will fall into narcissism. We evaluate and justify our physical images however they all may be unjust. I keep myself away from the mirror. Instead I take time once or twice a day to reflect within myself to review my decisions to remain humble. My own self-image is I am just another stray sheep with love of God. Such thought keeps me happy.”

■Kouki Sato (Eiko Gakuen Senior High School)

“Your message for “Migration, Ethnicity, Race & Health World Congress” in 2018 addresses the importance in growth of refugees as well as accepting communities. What is your thought for refugee issues?”

The Pope : “One of the UN staff claimed the refugee issue today is the biggest human tragedy after WW2 however the history of migration or refugees stands as long as our entire human history. Human race is based on migrations and Europe is established by over centuries of migrations. Migrants and refugees escaped from wars and poverty must be accepted by another community, education and works must be provided and not to be isolated. Such isolation may lead to terrorisms. Sweden has 50 years of history for accepting migrants and refugees and a good example to follow. So are Italy and Greece. I am hoping for young generation as you to study about migration and refugee issues in depth.”

■Rintaro Ishii (Rokko Gakuin Senior High School)

“What is your image of Japan? Is there any plan to visit Japan?”

The Pope : “Welcome to Vatican! I was in Japan for a week in the past. My impression of Japanese are with ideals, skilled, religious, rigorous and survivors of much grieves of the past. I am concern of its over-heated competitiveness and unstoppable spending and consumptions may weaken the country. However I respect Japan greatly. I received official invitation to Japan however I have lists of other countries to visit thus unsure when it is possible. I enjoyed today’s dialogues. I hope young generation as you will have opportunities to think much. Because your actions will lead to the wonderful future, I believe.”

[GO TO PAGE TOP](#)

[Access](#) [Contact](#) [Sitemap](#) [Privacy Policy](#) [Site Policy](#)

## Sophia School Corporation

[Sophia University](#) [Sophia University Junior College Division](#) [Sophia School of Social Welfare](#) [Eiko Gakuen Junior and Senior High School](#)  
[Rokko Junior/Senior High School](#) [Hiroshima Gakuin Junior and Senior High School](#) [Sophia Fukuoka Junior-Senior High School](#)

## Campuses

### Yotsuya Campus

7-1 Kioi-cho, Chiyoda-ku,  
Tokyo, 102-8554

### Mejiro Seibo Campus

4-16-11 Shimo-Ochiai, Shinjuku-ku,  
Tokyo, 161-8550

### Shakujii Campus

4-32-11 Kamishakujii, Nerima-ku,  
Tokyo, 177-0044

### Hadano Campus

999 Sannoudai, Kamiozuki, Hadano-shi,  
Kanagawa, 257-0005

### Osaka Satellite Campus

3-12-8 Toyosaki, Kita-ku, Osaka-Shi,  
Osaka, 531-0072



© Sophia University. All Rights Reserved.