

Scientists, believers should admit how little they know: pope

VATICAN CITY – Scientists and people of faith always must admit they don't know everything, and they must never be afraid to explore and discover more, Pope Francis told astronomy students and experts.

"As people who love what we do, we can find in our love for this universe a foretaste of that divine love which, in contemplating His creation, declared that it was good," he said on June 14.

The pope spoke to dozens of young astronomy students who were taking part in a month-long summer school sponsored by the Vatican Observatory.

The summer programme in astrophysics, held every two years, accepts a small group of promising university and graduate students, mostly from developing nations, who are specialising in astronomical sciences.

During a private audience in the apostolic palace, the pope praised the way the study programme brings together people from so many different countries, cultures and areas of specialisation.

This endeavour shows how "diversity can be united by a common goal of study" and how success in that work depends precisely on this diversity, he said.



An intricate spiral arms in a galaxy. Pope Francis told astronomy students and experts they should never be afraid of trying to learn more. *CNS file photo*

"Whether as scientists or believers, it is always important to start by admitting there is much that we do not know. But it is equally important" to never be satisfied with sticking with a "complacent agnosticism," the pope said.

"Just as we should never think we know everything, we should never be afraid of trying to learn more," he said.

Harmony between scientific knowledge, metaphysics and faith

"leads us to understanding, and understanding – we hope – will make us open to wisdom," he added.

In "Paradiso" by Dante Alighieri, the 14th-century Italian poet wrote that it is "love that moves the sun and other stars," the pope said.

"May your work likewise be 'moved' by love: love for truth; love for the universe itself; and love for one another as you work together amid your diversity." □

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Mexico fans in Moscow react after Mexico defeated Germany in the World Cup on June 17. *CNS photo*

Pope appeals for World Cup to promote peace

VATICAN CITY – As 32 nations vie for the World Cup in Russia, Pope Francis greeted players, organisers and soccer fans who will be following "this event that overcomes all borders".

"May this important sports event become an occasion for encounter, dialogue and fraternity between different cultures and religions, promoting solidarity and peace between nations," said the Argentine pope, who is an avid soccer fan.

He made his remarks in an

appeal at the end of his general audience in St Peter's Square on June 13.

The 2018 FIFA World Cup is being held in Russia from June 14-July 15. It is the first time the quadrennial tournament, which began in 1930, is held in Eastern Europe.

The ball being used in the first match – Russia vs Saudi Arabia – had been taken to the International Space Station by a Russian cosmonaut in March and returned to Earth on June 3. □ *CNS*

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