



The Holy See

**GREETING OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE SURGICAL CONGRESS OF THE
ASSOCIATION OF ALUMNI OF PROFESSOR IVO PITANGUY (AEXPI)**

*Clementine Hall
Thursday, 23 May 2024*

[Multimedia]

Dear brothers and sisters,

I welcome you with a smile on our lips, natural, not remodelled! In one of your cooperation projects, you try to bring a smile to the faces of many sick children and, by helping them, you also bring it to their families and, in a certain sense, society as a whole. Thank you for this discreet service to others.

But as people, as doctors, as Christians, we know that our faces are destined to reflect a beauty that goes beyond what can be perceived with the eyes of the body. A beauty that is not subject to the planned trends of the fashion business, the business of culture, the culture of appearances, but which connects to the truth of humanity, to its most intimate being, which we cannot disfigure.

Saint Paul tells us: “We all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into His likeness” (2 Cor 3:18). May this truth always guide your hand to bring to the world that image of God impressed upon our being, in good works, in the love we give, in the love we spread.

It is interesting that the Scripture presents Jesus to us as “the fairest of the sons of men” (Ps 45:2), and as He whose appearance, through suffering, “as so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the sons of men” (Is 52:14). Jesus shows us in this paradox His true image, and our own, which passes through the journey of the cross, through the acceptance of our

smallness, to the point of reaching perennial glory, a hope that neither disappoints nor withers (cf. *1 Cor 9:25*). I hope that God may bless you and the Virgin keep you. And do not forget to pray for me. Thank you.