



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY TO COLOGNE ON THE OCCASION OF THE XX WORLD YOUTH DAY

BENEDICT XVI

ANGELUS

Cologne - Marienfeld
Sunday, 21 August 2005

Dear Friends,

We have come to the conclusion of this marvellous celebration and indeed of the 20th World Youth Day. In my heart I sense welling up within me a single thought: "Thank you!". I am sure - and I feel - that this thought finds an echo in each one of you. God himself has implanted it in our hearts and he has sealed it with this Eucharist, which literally means "thanksgiving".

Yes, dear young people, our gratitude, born from faith, is expressed in our song of praise to him, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who has offered to us a great sign of his immense love.

Our "thank you", to begin with, rises up to God - only he could have given it to us in this way, as it was -, and our thanks are now extended to all those who have been involved in its preparation and organization.

World Youth Day was a gift, but, as it developed, was also the result of much work. For this I must renew my gratitude particularly to the Pontifical Council for the Laity, under its President Archbishop Stanisław Ryżko, ably assisted by the Secretary, Bishop Josef Clemens, who for years was my Secretary, and also to my Confrères from the German Bishops' Conference, in the first place, of course, to the Archbishop of Cologne, Cardinal Joachim Meisner. I am grateful to the political and administrative Authorities, who have made a great contribution, who have generously

helped and who have ensured that each event has run smoothly.

In a particular way I thank the many volunteers from all of the German Dioceses and from all the nations. A cordial word of thanks goes also to the many contemplative communities who have supported us in prayer during this World Youth Day.

And now, as the living presence of the Risen Christ in our midst nourishes our faith and hope, I am pleased to announce that the next World Youth Day will take place in Sydney, Australia, in 2008. We entrust to the maternal guidance of Mary Most Holy, the future course of the young people of the whole world. Let us now recite the *Angelus*.

Angelus Domini ...

After the Angelus

[French] I greet affectionately the French-speaking young people. Thank you dear friends, for your participation, and I trust that you return home bringing within, you like the Magi, the joy of having found Christ, the Son of the living God.

[English] I extend a warm greeting to the English-speaking young people from all parts of the world at the conclusion of these unforgettable days. May the light of Christ, which you have followed on your way to Cologne, shine ever more brightly and strongly in your lives!

[Spanish] Dear Spanish-speaking young people! You have come to worship Christ. Now that you have found him, continue to worship him in your hearts, always prepared to make a defence to any one who calls you to account for the hope that is in you (cf. *1 Pet* 3:15). Have a pleasant return home!

[Italian] My dear Italian-speaking friends! This Twentieth World Youth Day is ending, but the Eucharistic celebration must continue in our lives: bring to all the joy of Christ that you have found here.

[Polish] To all the young Polish people, I extend a warm embrace! As the great Pope John Paul II would say: keep the flame of faith alive in your lives and in your people. May Our Lady, Mother of Christ, guide your steps always.

[Portuguese] I greet with affection the Portuguese-speaking young people. I pray dear friends, that you will always live in friendship with Jesus, so as to know true joy and communicate it to others, especially to young people in difficulty.

[Tagalog] My dear Tagalog-speaking friends and all the young people of Asia! Like the Magi, you too have come from the East to worship Christ. Now that you have found him, return to your countries bringing in your hearts the light of his love.

[Swahili] A warm greeting also to you, young people from Africa! Bring to your great and beloved Continent the hope that Christ has given you. Be everywhere sowers of peace and brotherhood.

[German] Dear friends who understand me in my own language, I thank you for the affection with which you have sustained me in these days. Be close to me in prayer. Walk together in unity. Always be faithful to Christ and to the Church. May the peace and the joy of Christ be with you always!

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