



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY TO MEXICO AND THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA

(MARCH 23-29, 2012)

MEETING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI

Plaza de la Paz, Guanajuato

(From the balcony of the house of Count Rul)

Saturday, 24 March 2012

[\[Video\]](#)

Dear Young People,

I am happy to be able to meet with you and to see your smiling faces as you fill this beautiful square. You have a very special place in the Pope's heart. And in these moments, I would like all the children of Mexico to know this, especially those who have to bear the burden of suffering, abandonment, violence or hunger, which in recent months, because of drought, has made itself strongly felt in some regions. I am grateful for this encounter of faith, and for the festive and joyful presence expressed in song. Today we are full of jubilation, and this is important. God wants us to be happy always. He knows us and he loves us. If we allow the love of Christ to change our heart, then we can change the world. This is the secret of authentic happiness.

This place where we stand today has a name which expresses the yearning present in the heart of each and every person: "la paz", Peace. This is a gift which comes from on high. "Peace be with you" (Jn 20:21). These are the words of the Risen Lord. We hear them during each Mass, and today they resound anew in this place, with the hope that each one of you will be transformed, becoming a sower and messenger of that peace for which Christ offered his life.

The disciple of Jesus does not respond to evil with evil, but is always an instrument of good instead, a herald of pardon, a bearer of happiness, a servant of unity. He wishes to write in each of your lives a story of friendship. Hold on to him, then, as the best of friends. He will never tire of speaking to those who always love and who do good. This you will hear, if you strive in each moment to be with him who will help you in more difficult situations.

I have come that you may know my affection. Each one of you is a gift of God to Mexico and to the world. Your family, the Church, your school and those who have responsibility in society must work together to ensure that you receive a better world as your inheritance, without jealousies and divisions.

That is why I wish to lift up my voice, inviting everyone to protect and to care for children, so that nothing may extinguish their smile, but that they may live in peace and look to the future with confidence.

You, my dear young friends, are not alone. You can count on the help of Christ and his Church in order to live a Christian lifestyle. Participate in Sunday Mass, in catechesis, in apostolic works, looking for occasions of prayer, fraternity and charity. Blessed Cristóbal, Antonio and Juan, the child martyrs of Tlaxcala, lived this way, and knowing Jesus, during the time of the initial evangelization of Mexico, they discovered that there is no greater treasure than he. They were children like you, and from them we can learn that we are never too young to love and serve.

How I would like to spend more time with all of you, but the time has already come for me to go. We will remain close in prayer. So I invite you to pray continually, even in your homes; in this way, you will experience the happiness of speaking about God with your families. Pray for everyone, and also for me. I will pray for all of you, so that Mexico may be a place in which everyone can live in serenity and harmony. I bless all of you from my heart and I ask you to bring the affection and blessing of the Pope to your parents, brothers and sisters, and other loved ones. May the Virgin accompany you. Thank you very much, my dear young friends.