



The Holy See

MESSAGE OF THE HOLY FATHER JOHN PAUL II TO BROTHER ROGER OF TAIZÉ

*To Brother Roger
Prior of the Taizé Community*

"Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!" (Ps 133: 1).

The Taizé Community has chosen Warsaw as the latest stage on its "pilgrimage of trust on earth", to take place from 28 December 1999 to 1 January 2000. On this occasion, I am pleased to accompany you with my fervent prayer and to extend my cordial greeting to all the young people gathered in Poland, as I deeply hope that this 22nd European meeting will be a special time for mutual acceptance and brotherhood, for prayer and contemplation, which will lead to ever greater openness to God and to others.

A pilgrimage is a journey shared with brothers and sisters; therefore, at the beginning of this Jubilee Year I encourage the participants to make of their gathering place what Scripture tells us of *Jerusalem*, the Holy City, to which all peoples are invited: a place of joy and thanksgiving where God is known to be present and where it is good to dwell in his sight with filial trust, ever ready to do his will; a place where one becomes more and more aware that God is a very loving and merciful Father who makes humanity one family!

While many of our contemporaries are deeply affected by violence, fear of the future or the anguished question about the meaning of life, Christians must be more than ever the ardent and vigorous witnesses to the hope that fills them. May young people not be afraid to let Christ take hold of them and to find in his word the energy that will help them build up their interior life and lead them to join their brethren in building a new world based on mutual love and forgiveness! I strongly urge each of them: wherever you live, in your families, your schools, your places of work and recreation, always be servants of the *Gospel of hope!*

Dear friends, especially you who have been wounded by life's sorrows, be certain that Christ is

close to simple hearts and that he calls each person to true happiness; proclaim by your life that it is great to know that one is loved and appreciated for oneself, and that every person is always a brother or a sister to be welcomed and loved! On the threshold of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000, dare to commit yourselves to following Christ, to trusting him to the end and to being messengers of his love!

"Peace to men of good will": 2,000 years ago a light dawned in the world. Today, Jesus himself is asking you to kindle a fire on this earth, the fire of his charity. Once it is lit, charity cannot stop halfway; it must spread, glow brightly and radiate its heat afar! Do not be afraid; the Spirit of the Lord goes before you and accompanies you on your daily path; he is your guide and your light!

As I invoke on each one the intercession of Our Lady of Jasna Góra, may God shower an abundance of his blessings upon you, dear Brother, upon the Taizé Community, upon the organizers of this meeting and upon all the young people in Warsaw, as well as upon the parishes and families who are offering them hospitality.

From the Vatican, 30 November 1999.

JOHN PAUL II