

Inspire young people to be ‘everyday saints,’ archbishop says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — To “capture the imagination” of young people and inspire them, church leaders should offer them the example of modern saints and call young people to be “everyday saints, each in his or her own way,” said Archbishop Jose H. Gomez of Los Angeles.

“We need to show young people what holiness looks like by living the Gospel we preach, proclaiming Jesus Christ by the way we live. We need to call young people to be saints — and we need to be saints ourselves,” Archbishop Gomez said in his speech Oct. 16 to the Synod of Bishops.

The “urgent priority of all our resolutions from this synod,” he said, should be to proclaim Jesus Christ and to call young people to conversion and new life in Christ.

Western societies, Archbishop Gomez said, offer young people “alternatives for self-creation rooted in the restless consumption of material comforts” instead of calling them “to goodness or beauty or truth.”

“Young people today do not know how to live authentic human lives because the adults of our secular society have not shown them the way,” he said.

However, he said he is confident the church holds the answer that young people are looking for.

Reach out to the young people and “proclaim the Gospel as God’s beautiful plan of love for our lives,” he urged his brother bishops. By doing this, the dignity and destiny of the human person is revealed.

“God is calling young people to live their lives as a mission, following in the footsteps of Jesus Christ and walking in the company of others who have met him and made him the ‘way’ for their lives,” Archbishop Gomez said.

Church leaders, he said, have a mission, which “requires that we model for young people how to pray as a conversation with God and how to contemplate the face of Christ in the pages of the Gospel.”

It also requires “boldly proclaiming and confidently living” the teachings of Christ and helping young people perform the works of mercy, engaging in service to the poor.

“Young people today demand and deserve what every human heart is longing for — the encounter with Jesus Christ,” the archbishop said.

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