

Pope urges young people to express love in unselfish ways

VATICAN CITY - Pope Benedict XVI urged young people to express love in unselfish ways, looking past social goals of competition and productivity in order to become “witnesses of charity” in the world.

He held out Blessed Teresa of Calcutta as an example of a Christian who translated love into concrete action to help the poorest of the poor.

The pope made the comments in a message marking World Youth Day, which was being celebrated in most dioceses April 1, Palm Sunday. The text was released at the Vatican Feb. 5.

The theme of the papal message was love, and he began by telling young people that despite emotional disappointments and lack of affection in their own lives, they should know that “love is possible.”

“The purpose of my message is to help reawaken in each one of you - you who are the future and hope of humanity - trust in a love that is true, faithful and strong; a love that generates peace and joy; a love that binds people together and allows them to feel free in respect for one another,” he said.

He emphasized that God is the source of true love and that Christ’s suffering and death on the cross form the perfect expression of this divine love.

The pope focused on three areas where young people are called to demonstrate love of God: in the church, in marriage and in society.