Pope Benedict Speaks to Youth

See all the entirety of the Holy Father’s World Youth Day Messages at <http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/youth/index_en.htm>

Jesus sent his disciples forth on mission with this command: “Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation. The one who believes and is baptized will be saved.” To evangelize means to bring the Good News of salvation to others and to let them know that this Good News is a person: Jesus Christ. When I meet him, when I discover how much I am loved by God and saved by God, I begin to feel not only the desire, but also the need to make God known to others.

Dear friends, open your eyes and look around you. So many young people no longer see any meaning in their lives. Go forth! Christ needs you too. Let yourselves be caught up and drawn along by his love. Be at the service of this immense love, so it can reach out to everyone, especially to those “far away”. Some people are far away geographically, but others are far away because their way of life has no place for God. Some people have not yet personally received the Gospel, while others have been given it, but live as if God did not exist. Let us open our hearts to everyone. Let us enter into conversation in simplicity and respect. If this conversation is held in true friendship, it will bear fruit. The “nations” that we are invited to reach out to are not only other countries in the world. They are also the different areas of our lives, such as our families, communities, places of study and work, groups of friends and places where we spend our free time. The joyful proclamation of the Gospel is meant for all the areas of our lives, without exception.

World Youth Day Message 2013

Whatever brings us true joy, whether the small joys of each day or the greatest joys in life, has its source in God, even if this does not seem immediately obvious. This is because God is a communion of eternal love, he is infinite joy that does not remain closed in on itself, but expands to embrace all whom God loves and who love him. God created us in his image out of love, in order to shower his love upon us and to fill us with his presence and grace. God wants us to share in his own divine and eternal joy, and he helps us to see that the deepest meaning and value of our lives lie in being accepted, welcomed and loved by him.

Dear friends, joy is intimately linked to love. They are inseparable gifts of the Holy Spirit (cf. *Gal* 5:23). Love gives rise to joy, and joy is a form of love. Blessed Teresa of Calcutta drew on Jesus’ words: “It is more blessed to give than to receive” when she said: “Joy is a net of love by which you can catch souls; God loves a cheerful giver. Whoever gives with joy gives more”. As the Servant of God Paul VI wrote: “In God himself, all is joy because all is giving.”

World Youth Day Message 2012

Dear young people, learn to “see” and to “meet” Jesus in the Eucharist, where he is present and close to us, and even becomes food for our journey. In the sacrament of Penance the Lord reveals his mercy and always grants us his forgiveness. Recognize and serve Jesus in the poor, the sick, and in our brothers and sisters who are in difficulty and in need of help.

The Church depends on you! She needs your lively faith, your creative charity and the energy of your hope. Your presence renews, rejuvenates and gives new energy to the Church.

World Youth Day Message 2011

Dear young friends, I urge you to keep this perspective in developing your life plan: we are called to eternity. God created us to be with him, for ever. This will help you to make meaningful decisions and live a beautiful life.

The future is in the hands of those who know how to seek and find sound reasons for life and hope. If you are willing, the future lies in your hands, because the talents and gifts that the Lord has placed in your hearts, shaped by an encounter with Christ, can bring real hope to the world! It is faith in his love that, by making you stronger and more generous, will give you courage to face serenely the path of life and to take on family and professional responsibilities.

World Youth Day Message 2010

The main task for us all is that of a new evangelization aimed at helping younger generations to rediscover the true face of God, who is Love. To you young people, who are in search of a firm hope, I address the very words that Saint Paul wrote to the persecuted Christians in Rome at that time: “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

If you find your sustenance in Christ, my dear young people, and if you live profoundly in him as did the Apostle Paul, you will not be able to resist speaking about him and making him known and loved by many of your friends and contemporaries. Be his faithful disciples, and in that way you will be able to help form Christian communities that are filled with love, like those described in the *Acts of the Apostles*. The Church depends on you for this demanding mission

World Youth Day Message 2009

My dear young friends, the Holy Spirit continues today to act with power in the Church, and the fruits of the Spirit are abundant in the measure in which we are ready to open up to this power that makes all things new. For this reason it is important that each one of us know the Spirit, establish a relationship with Him and allow ourselves to be guided by Him.

Confirmation gives us *special strength* to witness to and glorify God with our whole lives. It makes us intimately aware of our belonging to the Church, the “Body of Christ”, of which we are all living members, in solidarity with one another. By allowing themselves to be guided by the Spirit, each baptized person can bring his or her own contribution to the building up of the Church because of the *charisms* given by the Spirit, for “to *each* is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the *common good*

World Youth Day Message 2008

My dear young friends, I want to invite you to “dare to love”. Do not desire anything less for your life than a love that is strong and beautiful and that is capable of making the whole of your existence a joyful undertaking of giving yourselves as a gift to God and your brothers and sisters, in imitation of the One who vanquished hatred and death forever through love. Love is the only force capable of changing the heart of the human person and of all humanity, by making fruitful the relations between men and women, between rich and poor, between cultures and civilisations.

World Youth Day Message 2007

To build your life on Christ, to accept the word with joy and put its teachings into practice: this, young people of the third millennium, should be your programme! There is an urgent need for the emergence of a new generation of apostles anchored firmly in the word of Christ, capable of responding to the challenges of our times and prepared to spread the Gospel far and wide. It is this that the Lord asks of you, it is to this that the Church invites you, and it is this that the world - even though it may not be aware of it - expects of you!

My dear young friends, I urge you to become familiar with the Bible, and to have it at hand so that it can be your compass pointing out the road to follow. By reading it, you will learn to know Christ. Note what Saint Jerome said in this regard: "Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ"

World Youth Day Message 2006