



The Holy See

JOHN PAUL II

ANGELUS

Second Sunday of Lent, 7 March 2004

1. “Jesus took Peter, John and James, and went up onto a mountain to pray” (Lk 9:28): this is how the Gospel of the Transfiguration of Christ begins, characterizing this Second Sunday of Lent. Luke the Evangelist stresses that Jesus is transfigured on the high mountain *while praying*, immersed in intimate and profound dialogue with God the Father. A dazzling light radiates from him, a foretaste of the glory of the Resurrection.

2. Each year in preparation for Easter, Lent invites us to follow Christ *in the mystery of his prayer*, source of light and strength in time of trial. In reality, to pray means to be spiritually immersed in God, in an attitude of humble cohesion to his will. *The interior light that transfigures the human person* comes from this trusting abandonment to God, making the person a witness of the Resurrection. However, it is only in listening to Christ, in following him with docility even to the passion and Cross, that this can become a reality. We must look towards him “because there is salvation in no one else but him, the Son of God”.

3. Twenty five years ago, precisely at the beginning of Lent, I wanted to extend to the entire world this message in the Encyclical Letter *Redemptor Hominis* (cf. n. 7). If human beings want to know themselves thoroughly, I wrote at the time, they must draw near to Christ, enter into him, “appropriate” and assimilate the entire reality of the Redemption (cf. n. 10). How true this truth still remains today!

May the Virgin Mother of the Redeemer help us to start afresh from Christ to build a world according to the true dimension of the human being.

After the recitation of the Angelus, the Holy Father said:

Next Saturday [13 March], at 5:45 p.m., a Marian prayer vigil will be held in the Paul VI Audience Hall on the occasion of the Second European Day of University Students with the theme: "Christ, hope for Europe". Dear University students, I await you in large numbers! We will entrust to Mary, *Sedes Sapientiae*, the way for the European people.

I wish you all a good Sunday.

At the conclusion of the Angelus, the Holy Father said the following:

During the week of Retreat in the Vatican, I did not forget the painful situation that exists in certain African nations and in the Middle East, especially in the Holy Land and in Iraq.

Those suffering because of unacceptable acts of violence and terrorism, which can only serve to worsen the condition of life of these dear populations, are our brothers and sisters.

As I pray for them and invite you to do the same, I would like to ask once again that the pathway be found to forgiveness and reconciliation.

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