



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY
OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
TO JAMAICA, MEXICO AND DENVER (COLORADO)
ON THE OCCASION OF THE EIGHTH WORLD YOUTH DAY
(AUGUST 8-16, 1993)

RECORDED MESSAGE BY THE HOLY FATHER READ DURING THE WAY OF THE CROSS

ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER JOHN PAUL II

*Mile High Stadium, Denver
Friday, 13 August 1993*

"Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world" (Cf. *Jn.* 1: 29).

1. Accused before a judge who condemns more out of fear and cynicism than out of conviction, Jesus is a victim of human pride and corrupt justice. Tortured and mocked, he is the image of what human beings are capable of doing to others when their hearts are hardened and the light of conscience is dimmed.

But, *in the eyes of the Father*, Jesus is the beloved Son, the innocent Lamb who goes to the slaughter for our sins: "Upon him was the chastisement that makes us whole, by his stripes we were healed" (*Is* 53,5).

From his self-sacrifice spring forgiveness and reconciliation for all. Even on the Cross Jesus had words of love: "Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing" (*Lk.* 23: 34).

That love reaches out to everyone without exception. The Gospel of Saint John records the prophetic words: "They will look upon him whom they have pierced" (*Jn.* 19: 37). From his side, pierced by the soldier's lance, flow blood and water (Cf. *ibid.* 19: 34), the sign of the *life-giving*

grace that fills the Church with new life, the new life that reaches us through the sacraments.

2. Young people of the *World Youth Day*, in this *Way of the Cross* you have looked upon the face of the suffering Christ, and adored the Lord raised up between earth and heaven. Before this terrible injustice and these terrible sufferings, only the words which God spoke through the Prophet Isaiah can turn our anguished sadness into hope: "See, my servant shall prosper, he shall be raised high and greatly exalted..."

Through his suffering, my servant shall justify many, and their guilt he shall bear...

He shall take away the sins of many and win pardon for their offenses" (*Is 52: 13; 53: 11-12*).

Young people, you are a special part of Christ's inheritance, the people won by the love of the Redeemer.

Take courage in the face of life's difficulties and injustices. Commit yourselves to the struggle for justice, solidarity and peace in the world. Offer your youthful energies and your talents to building a civilization of Christian love. Be witnesses of God's love for the innocent and the weak, for the poor and the oppressed.

3. The *Way of the Cross* has led you to the heart of the mystery of God's redeeming love, the mystery which is at the center of the Church's life, the mystery which is the core of all Christian witness and teaching. There is much to think and pray about. The "*World Youth Day*" has reached a moment of particular intensity. Here, the example of Mary can show us the way forward: "Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart" (*Lk. 2: 19*).

I invite you to create a climate of *silence and reflection*, so that a deepening awareness of the mystery can grow in every young person gathered here. Let us pray that the Love which God pours into our hearts through the Holy Spirit (Cf. *Rom 5: 5*) may not be blocked or hindered by passing distractions.

In that silence, may inner peace come to you, a peace which can be deepened and more fully possessed through the *Sacrament of Reconciliation* – "in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting our trespasses against us, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation... I beseech you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God" (Cf. *2Cor 5: 19-20*).

I hope that you will avail yourselves of the many priests who are here. In the *Sacrament of Penance* they are ambassadors to you of Christ's loving forgiveness.

4. On the first day of the week, at dawn, the women came to the tomb. They found the stone rolled back and a messenger who said: "Why do you search for the Living One among the dead? He is not here; he has been raised up. Remember what he said to you while he was still in Galilee – that the Son of Man must be delivered unto the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again" (*Lk 24: 5-7*).

The *new Life* that has burst forth in the Resurrection is the world's only hope.

In the name of Christ, in the name of the Church, in the name of needy humanity: I encourage you

to *have that new Life in you!* Be witnesses of that new Life to the world around you.

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