



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY TO THE FAR EAST AND MAURITIUS

HOLY MASS FOR THE YOUTH IN THE OLYMPIC GYMNASTICS HALL

HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II

Seoul (Korea)

Saturday, 7 October 1989

"Nanum Aboji-kkeso sesang saramdul kaundesso ppoba / na'ege makkyo jushin i saramdurege / Aboji-rul punmyong'hi allyo-joussumnida" (Io. 17, 6).

Sarang-hanun cholmuni yorobun, uri'e himang'in cholmuni yorobun!

1. These words of the Gospel take us back to the Upper Room where Jesus celebrated the Last Supper with his disciples. They take us back to the origin of the Eucharist, which Jesus instituted as the Sacrifice of reconciliation and the Sacrament of unity for all.

Today, here in your capital city, these words remind us of the beginnings of the Gospel and of the Church on Korean soil. In 1984 I came to your country to join you in giving thanks to Almighty God for that "beginning", which took place two hundred years ago. On that occasion I solemnly canonized your Korean Martyrs.

Andrew Kim and his companions bore witness to Christ and suffered death for their faithfulness. *They are the ones to whom Christ made known the Father's name.* They are the ones the Father gave him out of the world. They became the "beginning" for so many others who have believed in Christ "through their word", that is, through the witness of their lives (Cfr. *Io 17, 20*). You Catholic young people of Korea know what it means to follow their example. It means *to make Jesus Christ the central force of your lives and to fulfil the work that he gives you to do in the building of his*

kingdom!

2. The Pope is happy to meet the youth representatives of each parish in the land, of each Catholic group, association and movement. I greet each one of you! I welcome the presence of the students, the workers, the farmers; and I express my heartfelt union with those of you and all Korean youth who are burdened with suffering or illness. I gladly welcome the young men and women of other Christian communities and of other religious traditions.

Seoul has been chosen as the venue of the Forty-fourth International Eucharistic Congress. In these days, in a special way in Korea, the Church perpetuates *Christ's prayer for all those the Father has given him out of the world*. At the Last Supper did he himself not say: "I am praying... for those you have given me, for they are yours" (*Ibid.* 17, 9)? *This prayer is for all the sons and daughters of this land and this nation*. This prayer is for the peoples represented here by those who have come from the other countries of Asia and from Oceania, Africa, Europe and America. Jesus' prayer is for the whole world without distinction of nationalities, without discrimination of race or ethnic origin.

What is his prayer? Christ says to the Father: "*In your name keep those you have given me, so that they may be one as we are one*" (*Ibid.* 17, 11). The unity of Christ's disciples, in faith and love, is the great sign that the world needs *in order to believe*.

3. In the Upper Room where the Eucharist was instituted Christ also prayed the following words: "As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world: *I consecrate myself for their sake now, that they may be consecrated in the truth*" (*Io.* 17- 18-19).

Young friends! Accept these words of our Master and Redeemer as words spoken about you and to you! Accept the Sacrifice through which Christ consecrates himself as an offering for you – *for all*, and therefore for you! *Accept the mission which flows from your Christian vocation*. In fact, through Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist you bear within yourselves the heritage of Christ's Sacrifice, of his Death and Resurrection. By virtue of this Sacrifice you can and should share in Christ's saving mission: making his peace and reconciliation effective in your lives and in the world around you!

Christ's mission, *as revealed in the Gospel and signified in the Eucharist*, is always and everywhere *a work of unity and peace*. Your presence today in this stadium, with the Pope, in the company of your bishops and priests, must become a sign of your willingness to take up this task!

Can the Church in Korea count on its young people? On the holiness of life, and on the intelligent and generous collaboration of each one of you? The Pope hopes and prays that it may be so!

4. The Liturgy recalls the Old Testament *figure of Joseph*, the son of the Patriarch Jacob, who was

betrayed by his own brothers and sold to a group of travelling merchants. In this way they wished to banish him from their home, because he seemed to be above them.

The reality of disunity, of rancour and hatred, of envy and violence is all too frequent in human experience, even among members of the same family, of the same nation, and between the nations of the world. You yourselves are witnesses of the painful divisions that affect your own people. You are searching for a solution. But which of the many paths proposed is the right one? *Where are true unity and true peace to be found?*

The experience of Joseph can enlighten us. When he finally reveals himself to his brothers – as the one whom they had sold away into slavery – they feared a just punishment for the harm which they had inflicted upon him. But, Joseph said to them: “*Fear not... you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good*” (Gen. 50, 19-20).

Here we discover an extraordinarily profound and striking dimension of human relationships: the possibility of reconciliation and pardon, the excellence of justice grounded in love and expressed in an encounter of genuine openness and brotherhood. Here we begin to see that true unity and peace are not merely questions of economic and political structures. They are, more basically, the result of human acts of sincere love and effective solidarity among individuals and peoples.

5. *The Old Testament figure of Joseph has always been seen as a foreshadowing of Jesus Christ.* Jesus too was betrayed. He was given up to death on the Cross. All share in that death because the Son of God accepted the Sacrifice of the Cross as an offering for the sins of the world. Jesus’ ignominious death on Golgotha became *the source of redemption for all mankind*. By means of his Sacrifice, Christ opened the way for us to leave behind the slavery of sin and to find the path of salvation and of new life in God. That is the meaning of Jesus’ prayer the night before he died: “For their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be consecrated in the truth” (Jo. 17, 19). Christ is our way, our truth and our life in overcoming the powers of division, disharmony and death in the world.

For you, young Christians, there should be no doubt: *Jesus Christ makes true peace by the blood of the Cross* (Cfr. Col. 1, 20). It is precisely on the Cross that he shows clearly that love is stronger than hatred and violence, forgiveness is more just than retribution. This is not weakness, or mere passivism. Your martyrs, many of them of your own age, were much stronger in their suffering and death than their persecutors in their hatred and violence. *Violence destroys; love transforms and builds up*. This is the challenge which Christ offers to you, young people of Korea, who wish to be instruments of true progress in the history of your country. Christ calls you, not to tear down and destroy, but to transform and build up!

6. I wish to say a special word of encouragement and welcome to the twelve *young men and women who will receive the Sacrament of Baptism* during the Mass. They symbolize all those to

whom Jesus has made known the Father's name. They remind us that we have all been given a share in the "fullness" that "dwelt" in Christ and through him is given to us as we make our earthly pilgrimage to union with the Father.

Dear young people of Korea: "new life" in Christ – this is what you can contribute to your fellow young people and to Korea. *Christ is the source of a new style of life. That new life starts with an inner change of heart and leads to solidarity and service.* It is made of courage in trials and difficulties, of perseverance in doing good, of self-control even in the face of harm and injustice received, and of wise and intelligent cooperation in the social and cultural development of the community in which you live.

You are witnesses of the sufferings of your people. Some of you perhaps have suffered personally for the sake of justice. As Catholic young people you must know that the rebirth to which you aspire cannot come from hatred and violence. It must come from the transforming power of the love which Jesus pours into your hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to you in Baptism and which is constantly nourished in the Eucharist (Cfr. *Rom. 5, 5*). *The Eucharist is both grace and mission, both gift of life and call to discipleship.*

7. Jesus, "making peace by the blood of his Cross" (*Col. 1, 20*) reconciled us to the Father and to one another. *The new life, the true life you all yearn for with youthful fervour, was born of the loving self-giving of Jesus on the Cross.* It is this mystery of new life that we are celebrating tonight in the Eucharist. To this true life you are called to bear witness – like Andrew Kim and his companion martyrs – through your own forgiveness, through your own selfless sharing and service, through your own self-giving.

Here in Seoul, on this occasion, the Successor of Peter begs you, in the name of Christ, "to remain stable and steadfast in the faith, not shifting from the hope of the Gospel you have heard" (*Col. 1, 23*). My dear young people, be courageous witnesses before all the world of Jesus' reconciliation and unity, be the joyful and brave instruments of his peace!

Serang-hanun cholmuni yorobun, yorobunun uri modu'e himang-imnida. Amen.

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