



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY TO THE PHILIPPINES,
PAPUA NEW GUINEA, AUSTRALIA AND SRI LANKA

10th WORLD YOUTH DAY

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE IN "RIZAL PARK"**

Manila

Saturday, 14 January 1995

PART ONE

Dear Young People of the Tenth World Youth Day,

1. In your questions I see repeated once more the scene from the Gospel, where a young man asks Jesus: *Good Teacher, what must I do* (cf. Mk. 10:17)? The first thing that Jesus looked for was the attitude behind the question, the *sincerity of the search*. Jesus understood that the young man was sincerely looking for the truth about life and about his own personal path in life.

This is important. Life is a gift of a certain period of time in which each one of us faces a challenge which life itself brings: the challenge of having a purpose, a destiny, and of striving for it. The opposite is to spend our lives on the surface of things, *to "lose" our lives in futility*; never to discover in ourselves the capacity for good and for real solidarity, and therefore never to discover the path to true happiness. Too many young people do not realize that they themselves are the ones who are mainly responsible for giving a worthwhile meaning to their lives. *The mystery of human freedom* is at the heart of the great adventure of living life well.

2. It is true that young people today experience difficulties that previous generations experienced only partially and in a limited way. The weakness of much of family life, the lack of communication

between parents and children, the isolating and alienating influence of a large part of the media, all these things can produce confusion in young people about the truths and values which give a genuine meaning to life.

False teachers, many belonging to an intellectual elite in the worlds of science, culture and the media, present an *anti-Gospel*. They declare that every ideal is dead, contributing in this way to the profound moral crisis affecting society, a crisis which has opened the way for the toleration and even exaltation of forms of behavior which the moral conscience and common sense formerly held in abhorrence. When you ask them: what must I do?, their only certainty is that there is no definite truth, no sure path. They want you to be like them: doubtful and cynical. Consciously or not, they advocate an approach to life that has led millions of young people into a sad loneliness in which they are deprived of reasons for hope and are incapable of real love.

3. You ask, "what are my expectations of young people?". In "Crossing the Threshold of Hope" I have written that "*the fundamental problem of youth is profoundly personal. Young people... know that their life has meaning to the extent that it becomes a free gift for others*" (John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, p. 121). A question therefore is directed to each one of you personally: are you capable of giving of yourself, your time, your energies, your talents, for the good of others? Are you capable of love? *If you are, the Church and society can expect great things from each one of you.*

The vocation to love, understood as true openness to our fellow human beings and solidarity with them, is the most basic of all vocations. It is the origin of all vocations in life. That is what Jesus was looking for in the young man when he said: "Keep the commandments" (cf. Mk. 10:19). In other words: "Serve God and your neighbor according to all the demands of a true and upright heart". And when the young man indicated that he was already following that path, Jesus invited him to an even greater love: "Leave all and come, follow me: *leave everything that concerns only yourself and join me in the immense task of saving the world*" (cf. *ibid.*, 10:21). Along the path of each person's existence, *the Lord has something for each one to do.*

"*As the Father sent me, so am I sending you*" (Jn. 20:21). These are the words which Jesus addressed to the Apostles after his Resurrection. These are the words of Christ which guide our reflection during this Tenth World Youth Day. *Today the Church and the Pope address these same words to you, to you, the young people of the Philippines, the young people of Asia and Oceania, the young people of the world.*

4. Two thousand years of Christianity show that these words have been wonderfully effective. The little community of the first disciples, like a tiny mustard seed, has grown to be like a very big tree (cf. Mt. 13:31-32). This great tree, with its different branches, reaches all the continents, all the countries of the world, the great majority of which are represented here by their delegates. Dear Filipino young people: on that tree, your country is *an especially strong and healthy branch,*

stretching out to the whole vast continent of Asia. In the shade of this tree, in the shade of its branches and leaves, the peoples of the world can find rest. They can gather under its welcoming shade to discover, as you have been doing here during the World Youth Day, *the marvellous truth which is at the center of our faith*: that the Eternal Word, of one being with the Father, through whom all things were made, *became flesh and was born of the Virgin Mary*.

He dwelt among us.

In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

And from his fullness have we all received, grace upon grace (cf. Jn., prologue).

Through prayer and meditation, this evening Vigil is meant to help you to realize more clearly what *the extraordinary "Good News" of salvation through Jesus Christ* means for your lives. The "Good News" is for everyone. That is why the World Youth Day is held in different places.

5. On Palm Sunday last year, in Saint Peter's Square in Rome, young Catholics from the United States handed over to representatives of the Church in the Philippines *the World Youth Day Cross*. The Pilgrim Cross goes from one continent to another, and young people from everywhere gather to experience together the fact that Jesus Christ is the same for everyone, and his message is always the same. In him there are no divisions, no ethnic rivalries, no social discrimination. All are brothers and sisters in the one family of God.

This is the beginning of an answer to your question about what the Church and the Pope expect of the young people of the Tenth World Youth Day. Later we shall continue our meditation on the words of Jesus: "As the Father sent me, so am I sending you", and their significance for the young people of the world.

PART TWO

6. Your questions this time concern the Person and the work of Jesus Christ our Redeemer. You feel the mystery of his Person drawing you to know him better. You see how his words inspired his disciples to go out and preach the Gospel to every people, thus beginning a mission which continues to this day and which has taken the Church to every corner of the world. You want to be sure that if you follow him you will not be let down or disappointed.

In other words, how can we explain the extraordinary effect of his life, and the effectiveness of his words? *Where do his power and authority come from?*

7. Una lectura atenta del Evangelio de San Juan nos ayudará a encontrar una respuesta a nuestra pregunta.

Vemos cómo Jesús, a pesar de las puertas cerradas, entra en la habitación donde los discípulos

están reunidos (cf. Jn. 20:26). Les muestra sus manos y su costado. *¿Qué indican estas manos y este costado?* Son los signos de la Pasión y Muerte del Redentor en la Cruz. El Viernes Santo estas manos fueron traspasadas por los clavos, al levantar su cuerpo en la cruz, entre el cielo y la tierra. Y cuando la agonía había llegado a su fin, el centurión romano traspasó también su costado con la lanza, para asegurarse de que ya no vivía (cf. *ibid.*, 19:34). Inmediatamente brotaron sangre y agua, como una prueba patente de su muerte. Jesús había muerto realmente. Murió y fue colocado en el sepulcro, como era costumbre sepultar entre los Judíos. José de Arimatea le cedió la tumba familiar, que poseía cerca de sitio. Allí yació Jesús hasta la mañana de Pascua. Ese día, muy de mañana, algunas mujeres vinieron de Jerusalén para ungir el cuerpo inerte. Pero encontraron que la tumba estaba vacía. Jesús había resucitado.

Jésus ressuscité rejoint les Apôtres dans la salle où ils sont réunis. Et, pour prouver qu'il est bien celui qu'ils avaient toujours connu, il leur montre ses blessures: ses mains et son côté. *Ce sont les marques de sa Passion et de sa Mort rédemptrices, la source de la force* qu'il leur transmet. Il dit: "De même que le Père m'a envoyé, moi aussi je vous envoie... *Recevez l'Esprit Saint*" (*Ibid.*, 20:21-22).

8. *La Risurrezione di Gesù Cristo è la chiave per comprendere la storia del mondo*, la storia di tutto quanto il creato, ed è la chiave per comprendere specialmente la storia dell'uomo. L'uomo, al pari di tutto il creato, è sottoposto alla legge della morte. Leggiamo nella Lettera agli Ebrei: "È stabilito che gli uomini muoiano" (cf. Heb. 9:27). Ma grazie a quanto Cristo ha operato, quella legge è stata sottomessa a un'altra legge, la legge della vita. Grazie alla Risurrezione di Cristo, *l'uomo non esiste più solamente per la morte, ma esiste per la vita* che si deve rivelare in noi. È la vita che Cristo ha portato nel mondo (cf. Jn. 1:4). Di qui l'importanza della nascita di Gesù a Betlemme, che abbiamo appena celebrato nel Natale. Per questo motivo la Chiesa si prepara al *Grande Giubileo dell'Anno 2000*. La vita umana che a Betlemme fu rivelata ai pastori e ai saggi che vennero dall'Oriente in una notte stellata ha dato prova della sua indistruttibilità nel giorno della Risurrezione. Vi è un legame profondo tra la notte di Betlemme e il giorno della Risurrezione.

9. The victory of life over death is what every human being desires. All religions, especially the great religious traditions followed by most of the peoples of Asia, bear witness to *how deeply the truth regarding our immortality* is inscribed in man's religious consciousness. Man's search for life after death finds definitive fulfilment in the Resurrection of Christ. Because the Risen Christ is the demonstration of God's response to this deeply-felt longing of the human spirit, the Church professes: "I believe in the resurrection of the body and in life everlasting" ("Symbolum Apostolorum"). *The Risen Christ assures the men and women of every age that they are called to a life beyond the frontier of death.*

The resurrection of the body is more than just the immortality of the soul. The whole person, body and soul, is destined to eternal life. And eternal life is life in God. Not life in the world, which, as Saint Paul teaches, is "subject to futility" (Rom. 8:20). As a creature in the world, the individual is

subject to death, just like every other created being. The immortality of the whole person can come only as a gift from God. It is in fact a sharing in the eternity of God himself.

10. How do we receive this "life in God"? *Through the Holy Spirit!* Only the Holy Spirit can give this new life, as we profess in the Creed: "I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life".

Through him we become, in the likeness of the only-begotten Son, adopted children of the Father.

When Jesus says: "*Receive the Holy Spirit!*" he is saying: Receive from me this divine life, the divine adoption which I brought into the world and which I grafted on to human history. I myself, the Eternal Son of God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, became the Son of man, born of the Virgin Mary. You, through the power of the same Spirit, must become – in me and through me – adopted sons and daughters of God.

"*Receive the Holy Spirit!*" means: Accept from me this *inheritance of grace and truth*, which makes you one spiritual and mystical body with me. "*Receive the Holy Spirit!*" also means: *Become sharers in the Kingdom of God*, which the Holy Spirit pours into your hearts as the fruit of the suffering and sacrifice of the Son of God, so that more and more God will become all in all (cf. 1 Cor. 15:28).

11. Dear young people: our meditation has reached the heart of the mystery of Christ the Redeemer. Through his total consecration to the Father, he has become the channel of our adoption as the Father's beloved sons and daughters. The new life which exists in you by reason of Baptism is the source of your Christian hope and optimism. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and for ever. When he says to you: "*As the Father sent me, so am I sending you*", *you can be certain that he will not let you down; he will be with you always!*

PART THREE

Dear young Friends

12. The enthronement of Our Lady of Antipolo invites us to look to Mary to see how to respond to Jesus' call. First, she kept all things, pondering them in her heart. She also went in haste to serve her cousin Elizabeth. Both attitudes are essential parts of our response to the Lord: *prayer and action*. That is what the Church expects of her young people. That is what I have come here to ask of you. Mary, Mother of the Church and our Mother, will help us to hear her Divine Son.

13. "*As the Father sent me, so am I sending you*". These words are addressed to you. The Church addresses them to all young people around the world. Today though they are being addressed especially to the young people of the Philippines; and to the young people of China, of Japan, Korea and Vietnam; to the young people of Laos and Cambodia; to those of Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia; to the young people of India and of the Islands of the Indian Ocean; to the

young people of Australia and New Zealand, and of the Islands of the vast Pacific.

Sons and daughters of this part of the world, the home of the greatest part of the human family, you are called to the same task and challenge to which Christ and the Church call the young people of *every continent*: the young people of the Middle East, of Eastern Europe and Western Europe, of North America, of Central and South America, of Africa. *To each one of you Christ says: "I am sending you"*.

14. Why is he sending you? Because men and women the world over – north, south, east and west – long for true liberation and fulfilment. The poor seek justice and solidarity; the oppressed demand freedom and dignity; the blind cry out for light and truth (cf. Lk. 4:18). You are not being sent to proclaim some abstract truth. The Gospel is not a theory or an ideology! *The Gospel is life!* Your task is to bear witness to this life: the life of God's adopted sons and daughters. Modern man, whether he knows it or not, urgently needs that life – just as two thousand years ago humanity was in need of Christ's coming; just as people will always need Jesus Christ until the end of time.

15. Why do we need him? Because Christ reveals the truth about man and man's life and destiny. He shows us our place before God, as creatures and sinners, as redeemed through his own Death and Resurrection, as making our pilgrim way to the Father's house. He teaches the fundamental commandment of love of God and love of neighbor. He insists that there cannot be justice, brotherhood, peace and solidarity without the Ten Commandments of the Covenant, revealed to Moses on Mount Sinai and confirmed by the Lord on the Mount of the Beatitudes (cf. Mt. 5:3-12) and in his dialogue with the young man (cf. *ibid.*, 19:16-22).

The truth about man – which the modern world finds so hard to understand – is that we are made in the image and likeness of God himself (cf. Jn. 1:27), and precisely in this fact, apart from any other consideration, lies *the inalienable dignity of every human being*, without exception, from the moment of conception until natural death. But what is even more difficult for contemporary culture to understand is that this dignity, already forged in the creative act of God, is raised immeasurably higher in the mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God. This is the message which you have to proclaim to the modern world: especially to the least fortunate, to the homeless and dispossessed, to the sick, the outcasts, to those who suffer at the hands of others. To each one you must say: Look to Jesus Christ in order to *see who you really are in the eyes of God!*

16. Increasing attention is being given to the cause of human dignity and human rights, and gradually these are being codified and included in legislation both at national and international levels. For this we should be grateful. But the effective and guaranteed observance of respect for human dignity and human rights will be impossible if individuals and communities do not overcome self-interest, fear, greed and the thirst for power. And for this, man needs to be freed from the dominion of sin, through the life of grace: the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Jesus says to you: "I am sending you to your families, to your parishes, to your movements and associations, to your countries, to ancient cultures and modern civilization, so that you will proclaim *the dignity of every human being, as revealed by me, the Son of Man*". If you defend the inalienable dignity of every human being, you will be revealing to the world the true face of Jesus Christ, who is one with every man, every woman and every child, no matter how poor, no matter how weak or handicapped.

17. How does Jesus send you? He promises neither sword nor money nor power, nor any of the things which the means of social communications make attractive to people today. He gives you instead grace and truth. He sends you out with the powerful message of his Paschal Mystery, with the truth of his Cross and Resurrection. That is all he gives you, and that is all you need.

This grace and truth will in turn give rise to courage. Following Christ has always demanded courage. The Apostles, the martyrs, entire generations of missionaries, saints and confessors – known and unknown, and in every part of the world – have had the strength to stand firm in the face of misunderstanding and adversity. This is also true here in Asia. Among all the peoples of this continent Christians have paid the price of their fidelity and that is the sure source of the Church's confidence.

18. And so we come back to your original question: what does the Church and the Pope expect of the young people of the Tenth World Youth Day? *That you confess Jesus Christ*. And that you learn to proclaim all that the message of Christ contains for the true liberation and genuine progress of humanity. This is what Christ expects of you. This is what the Church looks for in the young people of the Philippines, of Asia, of the world. In this way your own cultures will find that you speak a language which is already echoed in some way in the ancient traditions of Asia: the language of true interior peace and the fullness of life, now and for ever.

Because Christ says to you: "*I am sending you*", you become a sign of hope and the object of our trust in the future. In a special way, you, the young people of the Tenth World Youth Day, are a sign, an "epiphany" of Jesus Christ, a manifestation of the Kingdom of God.

19. Lord Jesus Christ!

Through this *Tenth World Youth Day*, put "new life" into the hearts of the young people gathered here in Luneta Park, in Manila, in the Philippines.

Saint John writes that the life you give is the "light of men" (Jn. 1:4). Help these young men and women to take that light back with them to all the places from which they have come. Let their light shine for all peoples (cf. Mt. 5:16): for their families, for their cultures and societies, for their economic and political systems, for the whole international order.

Coming into the room where the disciples were gathered, after your Resurrection, you said: "*Peace be with you!*" (Jn. 20:21). Make these young people *bearers of your peace*. Teach them the meaning of what you said on the Mountain: "*Blest are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons and daughters of God*" (cf. Mt. 5:9).

Send them as the Father sent you: to free their brothers and sisters from fear and sin; for the glory of our Heavenly Father. Amen.

[*At the end of the Prayer Vigil, John Paul II addresses the young people in the following words*].

You are very good young people. It is incredible but it is true. You are indeed very good young people. We need the Filipinos to inspire us. This is true. You are all wonderful. Do you know where the next world youth day will be held? It will be in Paris! I just revealed a top secret. May I invite the Bishops to give the blessing?