



The Holy See

PASTORAL VISIT
OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
TO VERCELLI AND TURIN (ITALY)
(MAY 23-24, 1998)

***ADDRESS OF POPE JOHN PAUL II
TO YOUNG PEOPLE OF VERCELLI***

Saturday 23 May 1998

At the end of this solemn Eucharistic celebration, I would like once again to address a few words to you, *dear young people of Vercelli*, to propose this young priest whom I have just beatified as a model and guide for you.

Perhaps there are some among you who perceive a heartfelt urge to follow him *on the path of the priesthood*. May Fr Secondo Pollo obtain for these chosen ones the courage of saying a generous "yes" to God's call. But there is one thing he proposes to *everyone* this evening: *bet with him on holiness*. Whatever way each of you will choose in life, no one is excluded from that goal, because God calls *everyone* to be holy.

Fr Secondo Pollo realized this and that is why he was able, in just a few years, to scale the heights of Gospel perfection, living in deep friendship with God and with love for his brothers and sisters. In this he is an example to all of you, dear young people! If you want to imitate him, you must learn from him how to live your life *as a gift*. It is by starting with others that you will be able to rediscover yourselves. It is by giving yourselves to others that you will fully achieve your deepest aspirations. *Reject those who dissuade you from loving* and suggest calculation and selfishness. Those who speak in this way are actually spurring you to give up being complete men and women. In his short life, Fr Pollo was not guided by the search for selfish and fleeting emotions, but by his passion for Christ and for his brothers and sisters.

This *young priest* now stands before you, *young people* of Vercelli, and he is speaking to you through the witness of his whole life. From heaven, where he shares the joy of the blessed, he is telling you: do not be afraid; the Spirit of Christ is with you. Listen to him!

I cordially bless you all.

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