



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE ITALIAN CATHOLIC
SCOUT MOVEMENT FOR ADULTS (MASCI)
AND OF THE ITALIAN CATHOLIC GUIDES
AND SCOUTS ASSOCIATION (AGESCI)**

Saturday, 23 October 2004

1. I greet you with affection, dear members of the MASCI and the AGESCI, who are celebrating important anniversaries of your Associations, and I welcome you to this Square. Your presence in such large numbers gladdens my heart.

In cordially thanking those who have expressed your sentiments, I greet in particular the Bishops, chaplains and scoutmasters who direct you with dedication and competence.

Faithful to God, self, neighbour

2. Today you have desired to renew *your "Promise"* before the Pope, and I am delighted to be a witness to your resolution *to be faithful to God*, who calls you to live communion and friendship with him; *faithful to yourselves*, in the search for and realization of the project that the Father in his love has worked out for each one; *faithful to your neighbour*, who expects of you the gift of a fully human and Christian commitment.

The Scout Law helps you in this commitment of fidelity. Through it, as your founder, Lord Baden-Powell, used to like to say, you can make the impossible possible.

3. The Pope looks to you with trust and hope and accompanies you with his prayers and sympathy in the great adventure of life.

I ask you, *brownies and cubs*, to do "your best" every day to grow joyfully in your Circle and in your pack, discovering the marvels of creation.

I urge you, *guides and explorers*, to "always be ready" to do good, while with your troop you experience responsibility and learn to be active members of the ecclesial and civil community to which you belong.

I ask you, *rangers and rovers*, to do your utmost to make the verb "to serve" the motto of your life, in the conviction that the gift of yourselves is the secret that can make human life beautiful and fruitful.

4. Lastly, I am thinking of you who have the difficult but exalting role of *Chiefs* in the Association. You have been entrusted with the responsibility of accompanying on their way through life a great many children and young people who expect you to help them grow harmoniously, in order to contribute to building a world of friendship and solidarity.

Be men and women who, referring to the Gospel of Jesus, can educate others to live in freedom and responsibility, and "to swim against the tide" to overcome the temptations to individualism, laziness and disengagement.

5. As you know, dear friends, a few days ago the whole Church entered the *Year of the Eucharist*. I invite you to make the "Body given" and the "Blood poured out" a constant reference point in your daily choices.

May the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist in your parishes and in the camps see you attentively taking part in the listening and activity, and may it be the constant source and nourishment of your commitment.

6. "*Duc in altum*" (put out into the deep), AGESCI! "*Duc in altum*", MASCII! Do not be afraid to walk with imagination, wisdom and courage on the paths of education of the young generations. The future of the world and of the Church also depends on your educational enthusiasm.

Dear friends, with these sentiments I entrust all of you, your troops and your families to Our Lady of the Way and to St George, your Patron, and I wholeheartedly impart my Blessing to you all.