



The Holy See

**MESSAGE OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE GUIDES AND SCOUTS OF EUROPE
FOR THE SIXTH EUROPEAN JAMBOREE MEETING**

*To the Guides and Scouts of Europe
for the Sixth European Jamboree Meeting*

1. On the occasion of the Eurojamboree of the *Union internationale des Guides et Scouts d'Europe*, which is taking place in Poland, I am happy to greet you, dear Guides and Scouts of Europe, and assure you of my deep union in prayer. The theme of this "Eurojamboree", "*Duc in altum*", once more takes up the words Jesus said to Peter, "Put out into the deep" (Lk 5: 4), and it invites you to deepen the spiritual journey which was proposed to Christians around the world at the end of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000, and to the young people in Toronto last year.

2. Dear young people, be generous in answering Jesus' call inviting you to put out into the deep and become his witnesses, discovering the trust he puts in you to devise a future together with him. Above all, to fulfil this mission the Church is entrusting to you requires that you cultivate a genuine life of prayer nourished by the sacraments, especially the Eucharist and Confession. As I stated in the recent Encyclical *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*: "Every commitment to holiness... must draw the strength it needs from the Eucharistic mystery and in turn be directed to that mystery as its culmination" (n. 60). It is important, therefore, that the Holy Mass form the centre and the culmination of this and all your encounters, especially during your weekly celebration of the Lord's Day.

The scouting experience, a privileged route for spiritual growth, is a valid path that favours the total education of the person. It helps to overcome the temptation to be indifferent and egoistic and to open oneself to one's neighbour and to society. It can effectively promote the demands of the Christian vocation: to be "*salt of the earth and light of the world*" (cf. Mt 5: 13-16). I invite you to be faithful to the rich tradition of the scout movement and its formation programme through dialogue, the sense of justice, loyalty and friendly social relations. Such a lifestyle can be your original

contribution to the realization of a greater and more authentic fraternity between the peoples of Europe, a precious contribution to the life of the societies in which you live.

3. Dear Guides and Scouts of Europe, you are a precious gift not only for the Church, but also for the new Europe which you see growing before your eyes, and you have been called "to share, with all the ardour of youth, in building the Europe of peoples, so that the dignity of every individual as a child loved by God will be recognized, and a society built on the basis of solidarity and charity" (*To Boy Scouts and Girl Guides of Europe at St Peter's Basilica, 3 August 1994, ORE, 10/17 August 1994, p. 9*).

4. At the Shrine of Jasna Góra, particularly dear to me, you will renew your baptismal commitment in front of Our Lady of Czestochowa, together with your scout promise and your desire to be true apostles for the love of Christ. You will renew the act of consecration to Our Lady of the Annunciation which you pronounced nearly 20 years ago in the Cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris, on the occasion of your first European meeting. Since then, the *fiat* of Mary in response to God's will has become a core element of the spirituality of the Guides and Scouts of Europe, especially through the *Angelus* prayer and the Rosary. May these moments of Marian prayer in this year consecrated to Our Lady of the Rosary continue to fill your days, reviving in your hearts the memory of the marvellous Redemption Christ won for us.

When you return to your homes, to your families, to your communities, enriched by the experience of these days, let the words of Jesus resound in your hearts: "*I am with you always, to the close of the age*" (Mt 28: 20). Strengthened by his grace, strive to live your commitment with renewed enthusiasm; thus, scouting will be for you "the means of sanctification in the Church", that will favour and encourage "a more intimate union between real life and your faith" (*Statutes, art. 1, 2, 7*). This is my wish for you in my prayers.

While I wholeheartedly invoke the intercession of the Blessed Virgin of Czestochowa upon your European meeting, upon the leaders of the *Union internationale des Guides et Scouts d'Europe* and upon each of you, I impart with affection the Apostolic Blessing upon all.

From Castel Gandolfo, 30 July 2003

JOHN PAUL II