



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER JOHN PAUL II TO THE PILGRIMS FROM ROUEN

Friday, 14 April 2000

Dear Brother in the Episcopate,

Dear Young People from the Archdiocese of Rouen,

I welcome you with joy on your Jubilee pilgrimage to Rome, which is at once a time of spiritual retreat, reflection and prayer. I cordially greet everyone who is guiding you on your way, who supports you in your human and spiritual growth and helps you to answer the questions you ask yourselves.

Your stay in the city of Peter and Paul enables you to discover that the Church has a history and a tradition, and is a living people animated by the Holy Spirit. In receiving the witness of faith of the first Christian communities, you are invited in turn to be witnesses and to take your proper place among the People of God. The Church is counting on you; she needs your youth, generosity and dynamism, so that you will become more and more the people God loves, and a new hope will dawn for the world.

Through personal and community prayer, through the sacraments, through the conversations you may have and through visiting significant places of the Church's history and Rome's artistic treasures, you will know Christ and his Church better and will find the way to bear witness to the Good News among your friends. May you be the witnesses that the new century so needs! Of course, you will sometimes need courage and daring to swim against the tide of the tempting offerings of today's world and to act in conformity with the Gospel demands of true love. But you will discover that life with Christ, the search for Truth, the practice of fundamental human and moral values, respect for yourselves and for others lead to genuine freedom and true happiness. To achieve your ideals, ask adults to show you the way and to help you make progress!

The Jubilee is a particularly important occasion for experiencing the merciful love of God who, in forgiving us, opens a new future and communicates to us the fullness of divine life by becoming our food in the Eucharist. Do not be afraid to return ceaselessly to Christ, the source of Life! He wants to support you in your process of conversion, to fill you with grace and to give you his joy! At this time in your lives you rightly ask yourselves about your future. Showing you his confidence, Jesus turns his gaze to you and calls you to make your life something beautiful by letting the talents entrusted to you bear fruit for the service of the Church and of your brethren, as well as for building a society of greater solidarity, justice and peace.

Christ is calling you to put your hope in him and to follow him on the paths of marriage, priesthood or consecrated life. Do not be afraid to listen to the Lord as he speaks to you in the silence of your heart! The Church is at your side through her priests, religious and lay people, to help you to discern your true vocation. Jesus will give you the necessary grace to answer his call. He will give you the deep joy of true disciples.

I wish you all a good journey to Easter. May your Jubilee pilgrimage revive in you the desire to live intensely the great mystery of Christ who died and rose! I gladly impart my Apostolic Blessing to you and to all your loved ones.

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