



# The Holy See

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BENEDICT XVI

**GENERAL AUDIENCE**

*Paul VI Audience Hall*

*Wednesday, 19 March 2008*

*Dear Friends,*

I offer a cordial welcome to all of you who have come to Rome from various countries and universities to celebrate Holy Week together, and to take part in the International UNIV Congress. In this way, you will be able to benefit from moments of common prayer, cultural enrichment and a helpful exchange of the experiences gained from your association with the centres and activities of Christian formation sponsored by the Prelature of Opus Dei in your respective cities and nations.

Vosotros sabéis que con un serio compromiso personal, inspirado en los valores evangélicos, es posible responder adecuadamente a los grandes interrogantes del tiempo presente. El cristiano sabe que hay un nexo inseparable entre verdad, ética y responsabilidad. Toda expresión cultural auténtica contribuye a formar la conciencia y estimula a la persona a superarse a si misma a fin de que pueda mejorar la sociedad. Uno se siente así responsable ante la verdad, al servicio de la cual ha de ponerse la propia libertad personal. Se trata ciertamente de una misión comprometida y para realizarla el cristiano está llamado a seguir a Jesús, cultivando una intensa amistad con Él a través de la oración y de la contemplación. Ser amigos de Cristo y dar testimonio de Él allí donde nos encontremos exige, además, el esfuerzo de ir contracorriente, recordando las palabras del Señor: *estáis en el mundo pero no sois del mundo* (cf. *Jn 15,19*). No tengáis, por tanto, miedo, cuando sea necesario, de ser inconformistas en la universidad, en el colegio y en todas partes.

Cari giovani dell'UNIV, siate lievito di speranza in questo mondo che anela di incontrare Gesù, talora senza neppure rendersene conto. Per migliorarlo, sforzatevi anzitutto di cambiare voi stessi mediante una vita sacramentale intensa, specialmente accostandovi al sacramento della

Penitenza e prendendo parte assiduamente alla celebrazione dell'Eucaristia. Affido ciascuno di voi e le vostre famiglie a Maria, che non smise mai di contemplare il Volto del suo Figlio Gesù. Su ciascuno di voi invoco la protezione di San Josemaria e di tutti i Santi delle vostre terre, mentre di cuore vi auguro Buona Pasqua!

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### ***Easter Triduum***

*Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

The Easter Triduum, which the Church now prepares to celebrate, invites us to share in the mystery of Christ's suffering, death and resurrection. These days are the heart of the liturgical year. On Holy Thursday the Church recalls the Last Supper. At the Chrism Mass, the Bishop and his priests renew their priestly promises and the sacramental oils are blessed. The Mass of the Lord's Supper commemorates Jesus' institution of the sacrament of his Body and Blood and his commandment that we should love one another. On Good Friday, we ponder the mystery of sin as we listen to the account of the Lord's passion and venerate the wood of his Cross. Holy Saturday, a day of silence and prayer, prepares for the joy of the Easter Vigil, when the light of Christ dispels all darkness, and the saving power of his Paschal Mystery is communicated in the sacrament of Baptism. May our sharing in these solemn celebrations deepen our conversion to Christ, particularly through the sacrament of Reconciliation, and our communion, in the hope of the resurrection, with all our suffering brothers and sisters throughout the world.

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### **To special groups**

I offer a cordial welcome to the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors present at today's Audience, especially the pilgrims from Ireland, Canada and the United States. Upon you and your families I cordially invoke an abundance of joy and peace in the Lord!

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