



The Holy See

**VIDEO-MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO YOUNG PARTICIPANTS
IN THE 49th INTERNATIONAL EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS
IN QUÉBEC (CANADA)**

Saturday, 21 June 2008

Dear Young People,

I am happy to greet you from Rome and I assure you of my prayer while you are meeting for the 49th International Eucharistic Congress in Quebec. I rejoice to see your attention to the mystery of the Eucharist, "Gift of God for the life of the world", as the theme of the Congress emphasizes. I invite you to ceaselessly meditate on "this great mystery of faith", as we proclaim it in every Mass after the Consecration. First of all, in the Eucharist we relive the Lord's Sacrifice at the end of his life, through which he saves all men. In this way we remain close to him and receive in abundance the graces we need for our daily life and our salvation. The Eucharist is par excellence God's act of love for us. What could be greater than giving one's life out of love? In this, Jesus is the model of the total gift of self, the path on which we too must walk in his footsteps.

The Eucharist is also a model of the Christian journey which must shape our existence. It is Christ who convokes us to gather together, to constitute the Church, his Body, in the midst of the world. To be admitted to the twofold table of the Word and the Bread, we must first receive God's forgiveness, the gift which sustains us on our daily journey, restores the divine image within us and shows us the point to which we are loved. Then, just as in Luke's Gospel he addressed Simon the Pharisee, Jesus continuously addresses us through Scripture: "I have something to say to you" (7: 40). Indeed, every word of Scripture is a word of life for us that we must listen to with great attention. In a particular way, the Gospel constitutes the heart of the Christian message, the total revelation of the divine mysteries. In his Son, the Word made flesh, God has told us everything. In his Son, God has revealed his Face to us as Father, a Face of love, a Face of hope. He has shown us the way to happiness and joy. During the consecration, an especially important moment

of the Eucharist because in it we commemorate Christ's sacrifice, you are called to contemplate the Lord Jesus, like St Thomas: "My Lord and my God" (Jn 20: 28). After receiving the Word of God, after having been nourished by his Body, let yourselves be inwardly transformed and receive your mission from him. Indeed, he sends you into the world to be messengers of his peace and witnesses of his message of love. Do not be afraid to proclaim Christ to the young people of your age. Show them that Christ does not hamper your life or your freedom; show them that, on the contrary, he gives you true life, that he sets you free to fight evil and to make something beautiful of your life.

Do not forget that the Sunday Eucharist is a loving encounter with the Lord that we cannot do without. When you recognize him "at the breaking of bread", like the disciples at Emmaus, you will become his companions. He will help you to grow and to give the best of yourselves. Remember that in the Bread of the Eucharist, Christ is really, totally and substantially present. It is therefore in the mystery of the Eucharist, at Mass and during silent adoration before the Blessed Sacrament of the altar, that you will meet him in a privileged way. By opening your very being and your whole life under the gaze of Christ, you will not be crushed - quite the contrary: you will discover that you are infinitely loved. You will receive the power that you need in order to build your lives and to make the choices that present themselves to you every day. Before the Lord, in the silence of your hearts, some of you may feel called to follow him in a more radical way in the priesthood or the consecrated life. Do not be afraid to listen to this call and to respond with joy. As I said at the inauguration of my Pontificate, God takes nothing away from those who give themselves to him. On the contrary, he gives them everything. He comes to draw out the best that is in each one of us, so that our lives can truly flourish.

I impart an affectionate Apostolic Blessing to you, dear young people, and to all the participants of the International Eucharistic Congress at Quebec.