



The Holy See

VIDEO MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS ON THE OCCASION OF THE APOSTOLIC JOURNEY TO POLAND

[27-31 JULY 2016]

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The 31st World Youth Day is fast approaching. I look forward to *meeting the young people from throughout the world* gathered in Kraków and having the opportunity to *meet the beloved Polish nation*. My entire visit will be inspired by Mercy during this Jubilee Year, and by the grateful and blessed memory of Saint John Paul II, who instituted the World Youth Days and was the guide of the Polish people in its recent historic journey towards freedom.

Dear young people of Poland, I know that for some time now you have been preparing, especially with your prayers, for this great encounter in Kraków. I thank you heartily for everything that you have done, and for the love with which you have done it. Even now I embrace you and I bless you.

Dear young people from throughout Europe, Africa, America, Asia and Oceania! I also bless your countries, your hopes and your journey to Kraków, praying that it will be a pilgrimage of faith and fraternity. May the Lord Jesus grant you the grace to experience personally his words: “Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy” (*Mt 5:7*).

I am very anxious to meet you and to offer the world a new sign of harmony, *a mosaic of different faces*, from many races, languages, peoples and cultures, but all united in the name of Jesus, who is *the Face of Mercy*.

I now turn to you, dear sons and daughters of the Polish nation! For me, it is a great gift of the Lord to visit you. You are a nation that throughout its history has experienced so many trials, some particularly difficult, and has persevered through the power of faith, upheld by the maternal hands of the Virgin Mary. I am certain that my pilgrimage to the shrine of Czestochowa will immerse me

in this proven faith and do me so much good. I thank you for your prayers in preparation for my visit. I thank the bishops and priests, the men and women religious, and the lay faithful, especially families, to whom I will symbolically bring the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*. The moral and spiritual “health” of a nation is seen in its families. That is why Saint John Paul II showed such great concern for engaged couples, young married couples and families. Continue along this road!

Dear brothers and sisters, I send you this message as a pledge of my affection. Let us keep close to one another in prayer. I look forward to seeing you in Poland!