



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY
OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
TO SPAIN

MEETING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

GREETINGS OF JOHN PAUL II

Air Base of Cuatro Vientos in Madrid

Saturday, 3 May 2003

Dear Young People, Dear Friends:

I am back with you again. We know one another from previous meetings, such as the one in Toronto, Canada. I embrace each one of you.

1. I greet you affectionately, young people of Madrid and Spain! Many of you have come from far away, from all the dioceses and regions of the country, and from America and other countries of the world. I am deeply touched by your warm and cordial welcome. I confess to you that I have been looking forward very much to this meeting with you.

I greet you and I repeat to you the same words I used when I addressed the young people in Santiago Bernabéu Stadium during my first visit to Spain more than 20 years ago: "*You are the hope of the Church and of society...* I continue to believe in young people, in you" (3 November 1982, n. 1).

I embrace you with great affection, and with you, I also greet the Bishops, priests and other pastoral collaborators who accompany you on your journey of faith.

I am grateful for the presence of Their Royal Highnesses, the Prince of Asturias, the Duke and Duchess of Lugo and the Duke and Duchess of Palma, as well as the Authorities of the Spanish Government.

I would also like to thank Archbishop Braulio Rodríguez, President of the Episcopal Commission of the Lay Apostolate, and the young people, Margarita and José, for their cordial words of welcome on behalf of everyone here. I greet Archbishop Manuel Estepa, Military Ordinary, and the Military Authorities who are giving us hospitality at this Air Base.

2. Dear young people, *the grace of God must shine forth* in your lives, as it shone in Mary, full of grace.

At this Vigil you have fittingly wished to meditate on the mysteries of the Rosary, putting into practice the ancient spiritual maxim: "To Jesus through Mary". Undoubtedly, in the Rosary we *learn from Mary to contemplate the beauty of the face of Christ*, and to feel the depth of his love. As we begin this prayer, therefore, let us turn our gaze to the Mother of the Lord and ask her to guide us to her Son Jesus:

"Queen of Heaven, rejoice!

For Christ whom you deserved to bear in your womb has risen! Alleluia!"