



# The Holy See

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HOLY MASS

***HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIV***

*Tor Vergata*

*18th Sunday in Ordinary Time, 3 August 2025*

[Multimedia]

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## **Greeting of His Holiness Pope Leo XIV to Young People before Holy Mass**

Good morning! Happy Sunday! I hope that all of you rested a little bit. We will shortly begin the greatest celebration that Christ left us, his very presence in the Eucharist. God bless you all. May this be a truly memorable occasion for each and every one of us when together, as Christ's Church, we walk together and we live with Jesus Christ.

A blessed celebration to all!

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*Dear young people,*

After last night's Prayer Vigil, we gather again today to celebrate the Eucharist, the Sacrament of the Lord's total gift of himself to us. We can imagine ourselves today retracing the journey made on Easter evening by the disciples on the road to Emmaus (cf. *Lk* 24:13-35): they set out from Jerusalem frightened and disappointed, convinced that, after Jesus' death, there was nothing more to expect, nothing in which to place their hope. But they later found him along the way, welcomed him as a travelling companion, listened to him as he explained the Scriptures, and then

recognized him in the breaking of the bread. Their eyes were opened, and the joyful news of Easter found a place in their hearts.

Today's liturgy does not mention this episode directly, but it does invite us to reflect on what it recounts: the encounter with the risen Christ who transforms our lives and enlightens our affections, desires and thoughts.

The first reading, taken from the Book of Ecclesiastes, invites us, like the two disciples, to come to terms with the experience of our limitations and the fleeting nature of all things that pass away (cf. *Ecccl* 1:2; 2:21-23). On a similar note, the Responsorial Psalm presents us with the image of "the grass that is renewed... in the morning it flourishes and is renewed; in the evening it fades and withers" (*Ps* 90:5-6). These are two strong reminders which may be a bit shocking, but which should not frighten us as if they were "taboo" issues to be avoided. The fragility they speak of is, in fact, part of the marvel of creation. Think of the image of grass: is not a field of flowers beautiful? Of course, it is delicate, made up of small, vulnerable stems, prone to drying out, to being bent and broken. Yet at the same time these flowers are immediately replaced by others that sprout up after them, generously nourished and fertilized by the first ones as they decay on the ground. This is how the field survives: through constant regeneration. Even during the cold months of winter, when everything seems silent, its energy stirs beneath the ground, preparing to blossom into a thousand colors when spring comes.

We too, dear friends, are made this way, we are made for this. We are not made for a life where everything is taken for granted and static, but for an existence that is constantly renewed through gift of self in love. This is why we continually aspire to something "more" that no created reality can give us; we feel a deep and burning thirst that no drink in this world can satisfy. Knowing this, let us not deceive our hearts by trying to satisfy them with cheap imitations! Let us rather listen to them! Let us turn this thirst into a step stool, like children who stand on tiptoe, in order to peer through the window of encounter with God. We will then find ourselves before him, who is waiting for us, knocking gently on the window of our soul (cf. *Rev* 3:20). It is truly beautiful, especially at a young age, to open wide your hearts, to allow him to enter, and to set out on this adventure with him towards eternity.

Saint Augustine, reflecting on his intense search for God, asked himself: "What, then, is the object of our hope [...]? Is it the earth? No. Is it something that comes from the earth, such as gold, silver, trees, crops, or water [...]? These things are pleasing, these things are beautiful, these things are good" (*Sermo* 313/F, 3). And the conclusion he reached was: "Seek the one who made them, he is your hope" (*ibid.*). Thinking of his own journey, he prayed, saying: "You [Lord] were within me, but I was outside, and it was there that I searched for you [...] You called, you shouted, and you broke through my deafness. You flashed, you shone and you dispelled my blindness. You breathed your fragrance on me; I drew in breath and now I pant for you. I have tasted you (cf. *Ps* 34:8; *1 Pt* 2:3) now I hunger and thirst for more (cf. *Mt* 5:6; *1 Cor* 4:11); you touched me, and I burned for your

peace” (*Confessions*, 10, 27).

Sisters and brothers, these are beautiful words and they remind us of what [Pope Francis](#) said to young people like you in Lisbon during World Youth Day: “we find ourselves facing great questions that have no simple or immediate answers, but challenge us to continue the journey, to rise above ourselves and to press beyond the here and now. [...] We are called to something higher, and we will never be able to soar unless we first take flight. We should not be alarmed, then, if we sense an inner thirst, a restless, unfulfilled longing for meaning and a future [...] We should not be lethargic, but alive!” ([Address to University Students](#), 3 August 2023).

There is a burning question in our hearts, a need for truth that we cannot ignore, which leads us to ask ourselves: what is true happiness? What is the true meaning of life? What can free us from being trapped in meaninglessness, boredom and mediocrity?

In recent days, you have had many beautiful experiences. You have met other young people from different parts of the world and from diverse cultures. You have exchanged knowledge, shared expectations and entered into dialogue with the city through art, music, technology and sport. At the Circus Maximus, you also approached the Sacrament of Penance and received God’s forgiveness, asking for his help to live a good life.

Through all this, you can grasp an important point: the fullness of our existence does not depend on what we store up or, as we heard in the Gospel, on what we possess (cf. *Lk* 12:13-21). Rather, fullness has to do with what we joyfully welcome and share (cf. *Mt* 10:8-10; *Jn* 6:1-13). Buying, hoarding and consuming are not enough. We need to lift our eyes, to look upwards, to the “things that are above” (*Col* 3:2), to realize that everything in the world has meaning only insofar as it serves to unite us to God and to our brothers and sisters in charity, helping us to grow in “compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience” (*Col* 3:12), forgiveness (cf. *ibid.*, v. 13) and peace (cf. *Jn* 14:27), all in imitation of Christ (cf. *Phil* 2:5). And in this way we will grow in an ever deeper understanding of what it means that hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us (cf. *Rom* 5:5).

Dear young people, Jesus is our hope. It is he, as [Saint John Paul II](#) said, “who stirs in you the desire to do something great with your lives [...] to commit... to improving yourselves and society, making the world more human and more fraternal.” ([XV World Youth Day, Prayer Vigil](#), 19 August 2000). Let us remain united to him, let us remain in his friendship, always, cultivating it through prayer, adoration, Eucharistic Communion, frequent Confession, and generous charity, following the examples of Blessed Piergiorgio Frassati and Blessed Carlo Acutis [who will soon be declared saints](#). Aspire to great things, to holiness, wherever you are. Do not settle for less. You will then see the light of the Gospel growing every day, in you and around you.

I entrust you to the Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Hope. With her help, as you return to your countries in the coming days, in every part of the world, continue to walk joyfully in the footsteps of the Savior, and spread your enthusiasm and the witness of your faith to everyone you meet! Have a good trip home!