



# POPE FRANCIS

## Papal Visit: South Korea

### *Meeting with Young people at the Sanctuary of Solmoe*

15 AUGUST 2014 , SANCTUARY OF SOLMOE

Dear Young Friends,

“It is good for us to be here!” (Mt 17:4). These words were spoken by Saint Peter on Mount Tabor as he stood in the presence of Jesus transfigured in glory. Truly it is good for us to be here, together, at this shrine of the Korean Martyrs, in whom the Lord’s glory was revealed at the dawn of the Church’s life in this country. In this great assembly, which brings together young Christians from throughout Asia, we can almost feel the glory of Jesus present in our midst, present in his Church which embraces every nation, language and people, present in the power of his Holy Spirit who makes all things new, young and alive!

I thank you for your warm welcome, and for the gift of your enthusiasm, your joyful songs, your testimonies of faith, and your beautiful expressions of the variety and richness of your different cultures. In a special way, I thank the three young people who shared with me your hopes, your problems and your concerns; I listened to them carefully, and I will keep them in mind. I thank Bishop Lazzaro You Heung-sik for his words of introduction and I greet all of you from my heart.

This afternoon I would like to reflect with you on part of the theme of this Sixth Asian Youth Day: “The Glory of the Martyrs Shines on You”. Just as the Lord made his glory shine forth in the heroic witness of the martyrs, so too he wants to make his glory shine in your lives, and through you, to light up the life of this vast continent. Today Christ is knocking at the door of your heart. He calls you to rise, to be wide awake and alert, and to see the things in life that really matter. What is more, he is asking you to go out on the highways and byways of this world, knocking on the doors of other people’s hearts, inviting them to welcome him into their lives.

This great gathering of Asian young people also allows us to see something of what the Church herself is meant to be in God’s eternal plan. Together with young people everywhere, you want to help build a world where we all live together in peace and friendship, overcoming barriers, healing divisions, rejecting violence and prejudice. And this is exactly what God wants for us. The Church is meant to be a seed of unity for the whole human family. In Christ, all nations and peoples are called to a unity which does not destroy diversity but acknowledges, reconciles and enriches it.

How distant the spirit of the world seems from that magnificent vision and plan! How often the seeds of goodness and hope which we try to sow seem to be choked by weeds of selfishness, hostility and injustice, not only all around us, but also in our own hearts. We are troubled by the growing gap in our societies between rich and poor. We see signs of an idolatry of wealth, power and pleasure which come at a high cost to human lives. Closer to home, so many of our own friends and contemporaries, even in the midst of immense material prosperity, are suffering from spiritual poverty, loneliness and quiet despair. God seems to be removed from the picture. It is almost as though a spiritual desert is beginning to spread throughout our world. It affects the young too, robbing them of hope and even, in all too many cases, of life itself.

Yet this is the world into which you are called to go forth and bear witness to the Gospel of hope, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the promise of his Kingdom. In the parables, Jesus tells us that the Kingdom comes into the world quietly, growing silently yet surely wherever it is welcomed by hearts open to its message of hope and salvation. The Gospel teaches us that the Spirit of Jesus can bring new life to every human heart and

can transform every situation, even the most apparently hopeless. This is the message which you are called to share with your contemporaries: at school, in the workplace, in your families, your universities and your communities. Because Jesus rose from the dead, we know that he has “the words of eternal life” (Jn 6:68), that his word has the power to touch every heart, to conquer evil with good, and to change and redeem the world.

Dear young friends, in this generation the Lord is counting on you! He entered your hearts on the day of your Baptism; he gave you his Spirit on the day of your Confirmation; and he strengthens you constantly by his presence in the Eucharist, so that you can be his witnesses before the world. Are you ready to say “yes” to him? Are you ready?

Now it is time for me to go. I look forward to seeing you in these days and speaking to you again when we gather for Holy Mass on Sunday. For now, let us thank the Lord for the blessings of this time together and ask him for the strength to be faithful and joyful witnesses of his love throughout Asia and the entire world.

May Mary, our Mother, watch over you and keep you ever close to Jesus her Son. And from his place in heaven, may Saint John Paul II, who initiated the World Youth Days, always be your guide. With great affection I give you my blessing.

***Francis***

*From the Vatican, 15 August 2014*