

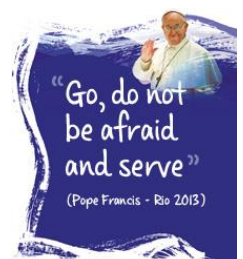


# World Youth Day, Rio de Janeiro, July 2013

## Words from Pope Francis – Highlights

**Full texts at [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)**

Translations © Copyright - Libreria Editrice Vaticana



## **Visit to the community of Varghina (favela), Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> July 2013**

From the moment I first set foot on Brazilian soil, right up to this meeting here with you, I have been made to feel welcome. ... when we are generous in welcoming people and sharing something with them – some food, a place in our homes, our time – not only do we no longer remain poor: we are enriched. I am well aware that when someone needing food knocks at your door, you always find a way of sharing food; as the proverb says, one can always “add more water to the beans”! Is it possible to add more water to the beans? ... Always? ... And you do so with love, demonstrating that **true riches consist not in material things, but in the heart!**

No one can remain insensitive to the inequalities that persist in the world! Everybody, according to his or her particular opportunities and responsibilities, should be able to make a personal contribution to putting an end to so many social injustices. **The culture of selfishness and individualism that often prevails in our society is not, I repeat, not what builds up and leads to a more habitable world: rather, it is the culture of solidarity that does so; the culture of solidarity means seeing others not as rivals or statistics, but brothers and sisters. And we are all brothers and sisters!**

We must never, never allow the throwaway culture to enter our hearts! We must never allow the throwaway culture to enter our hearts, because we are brothers and sisters. **No one is disposable!** Let us always remember this: only when we are able to share do we become truly rich; everything that is shared is multiplied! Think of the multiplication of the loaves by Jesus! **The measure of the greatness of a society is found in the way it treats those most in need, those who have nothing apart from their poverty!**

I would also like to tell you that the Church, the “advocate of justice and defender of the poor in the face of intolerable social and economic inequalities which cry to heaven” (*Aparecida Document*, 395), wishes to offer her support for every initiative that can signify genuine development for every person and for the whole person. Dear friends, it is certainly necessary to give bread to the hungry – this is an act of justice. But there is also a deeper hunger, the hunger for a happiness that only God can satisfy, the hunger for dignity.

**You young people, my dear young friends, you have a particular sensitivity towards injustice,** but you are often disappointed by facts that speak of corruption on the part of people who put their own interests before the common good. To you and to all, I repeat: never yield to discouragement, **do not lose trust, do not allow your hope to be extinguished. Situations can change, people can change.** Be the first to seek to bring good, do not grow accustomed to evil, but defeat it with good. The Church is with you, bringing you the precious good of faith, bringing Jesus Christ, who “came that they may have life and have it abundantly” (*Jn 10:10*).

\* \* \* \* \*

**Meeting with the young people from Argentina, Cathedral, Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> July 2013**

**Let me tell you what I hope will be the outcome of World Youth Day: I hope there will be noise** [*also translated as mess, confusion, disquiet*]. Here there will be noise, I'm quite sure. Here in Rio there will be plenty of noise, no doubt about that. But I want you to make yourselves heard in your dioceses, I want the noise to go out, I want the Church to go out onto the streets, **I want us to resist everything worldly, everything static, everything comfortable, everything to do with clericalism, everything that might make us closed in on ourselves. The parishes, the schools, the institutions are made for going out ...** if they don't, they become an NGO, and the Church cannot be an NGO. **May the bishops and priests forgive me if some of you create a bit of confusion afterwards.** That's my advice. Thanks for whatever you can do.

Look, at this moment, I think our world civilization has gone beyond its limits, it has gone beyond its limits because it has made money into such a god that we are now faced with a philosophy and a practice which exclude the two ends of life that are most full of promise for peoples. They exclude the elderly, obviously. You could easily think there is a kind of hidden euthanasia, that is, we don't take care of the elderly; but there is also a cultural euthanasia, because we don't allow them to speak, we don't allow them to act. And there is the exclusion of the young. The percentage of our young people without work, without employment, is very high and we have a generation with no experience of the dignity gained through work. This civilization, in other words, has led us to exclude the two peaks that make up our future. **As for the young, they must emerge, they must assert themselves, the young must go out to fight for values, to fight for these values; and the elderly must open their mouths, the elderly must open their mouths and teach us! Pass on to us the wisdom of the peoples!**

I ask the elderly, from my heart: do not cease to be the cultural storehouse of our people, a storehouse that hands on justice, hands on history, hands on values, hands on the memory of the people. And the rest of you, please, do not oppose the elderly: let them speak, listen to them and go forward. But know this, know that at this moment, you young people and you elderly people are condemned to the same destiny: exclusion. Don't allow yourselves to be excluded.

Faith in Jesus Christ is not a joke, it is something very serious. It is a scandal that God came to be one of us. It is a scandal that he died on a cross. It is a scandal: the scandal of the Cross. The Cross continues to provoke scandal. But it is the one sure path, the path of the Cross, the path of Jesus, the path of the Incarnation of Jesus. Please do not water down your faith in Jesus Christ. We dilute fruit drinks – orange, apple, or banana juice, but please do not drink a diluted form of faith. Faith is whole and entire, not something that you water down. It is faith in Jesus. It is faith in the Son of God made man, who loved me and who died for me. So then: make yourselves heard; take care of the two ends of the population: the elderly and the young; do not allow yourselves to be excluded and do not allow the elderly to be excluded.

\* \* \* \* \*

## ***Welcoming Ceremony, Waterfront of Copacabana, Thursday, 25 July 2013***

Looking out to this sea, the beach and all of you gathered here, I am reminded of the moment when Jesus called the first disciples to follow him by the shores of Lake Tiberias. **Today Christ asks each of us again: Do you want to be my disciple? Do you want to be my friend? Do you want to be a witness to my Gospel?**

I have come as well to be confirmed by the enthusiasm of your faith! You know that in the life of a Bishop there are many problems that need to be resolved. And with these problems and difficulties, a Bishop's faith can grow sad. How horrible is a sad Bishop! How bad is that! So that my faith might not be sad, I came here to be filled with your contagious enthusiasm!

**"Bota fé – put on faith"**. The World Youth Day Cross has proclaimed these words throughout its pilgrimage in Brazil. "Put on faith": what does this mean? When we prepare a plate of food and we see that it needs salt, well, we "put on" salt; when it needs oil, then you "put on" oil. "To put on", that is, to place on top of, to pour over. **And so it is in our life, dear young friends: if we want it to have real meaning and fulfilment, as you want and as you deserve, I say to each one of you, "Put on faith", and life will take on a new flavour**, life will have a compass to show you the way; "put on hope" and every one of your days will be enlightened and your horizon will no longer be dark, but luminous; "put on love", and your life will be like a house built on rock, your journey will be joyful, because you will find many friends to journey with you. Put on faith, put on hope, put on love! But who can give us all this? In the Gospel we hear the answer: Christ.

**Today, it would be good for all of us to ask ourselves sincerely: in whom do we place our trust?** In ourselves, in material things, or in Jesus? We all have the temptation often to put ourselves at the centre, to believe that we are the axis of the universe, to believe that we alone build our lives or to think that our life can only be happy if built on possessions, money, or power. But we all know that it is not so. Certainly, **possessions, money and power can give a momentary thrill, the illusion of being happy, but they end up possessing us and making us always want to have more, never satisfied. And we end up "full", but not nourished, and it is very sad to see young people "full", but weak.**

**Dear friends, faith is revolutionary and today I ask you: are you open to entering into this revolutionary wave of faith?** Only by entering into this wave will your young lives make sense and so be fruitful!

Dear young people: "Put on Christ" in your lives. In these days, Christ awaits you in his word; listen carefully to him and his presence will arouse your heart; "Put on Christ": he awaits you in the sacrament of Penance, with his mercy he will cure all the wounds caused by sin. Do not be afraid to ask God's forgiveness, because he never tires of forgiving us, like a father who loves us. God is pure mercy! "Put on Christ": he is waiting for you also in the Eucharist, the sacrament of his presence and his sacrifice of love, and he is waiting for you also in the humanity of the many young people who will enrich you with their friendship, encourage you by their witness to the faith, and teach you the language of love, goodness and service.

You too, dear young people, can be joyful witnesses of his love, courageous witnesses of his Gospel, carrying to this world a ray of his light. Let yourselves be loved by Christ, he is a friend that will not disappoint.

\* \* \* \* \*

***Angelus, from the balcony of the Archbishop's Residence of St. Joaquin, Friday, 26<sup>th</sup> July***

Speaking about family life, I would like to say one thing: today, as Brazil and the Church around the world celebrate this feast of Saints Joachim and Anne [the parents of Mary, "grandparents" of Jesus], Grandparents Day is also being celebrated. How important grandparents are for family life ... **"Children and the elderly build the future of peoples: children because they lead history forward, the elderly because they transmit the experience and wisdom of their lives."** This relationship and this dialogue between generations is a treasure to be preserved and strengthened! In this World Youth Day, young people wish to acknowledge and honour their grandparents. They salute them with great affection. Grandparents. Let us salute grandparents. Young people salute their grandparents with great affection and they thank them for the ongoing witness of their wisdom.

\* \* \* \* \*

***Way of the Cross with young people, waterfront of Copacabana beach, Friday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2013***

The World Youth Day Cross has travelled to every continent and through a variety of human situations. It is, as it were, almost "steeped" in the life experiences of the countless young people who have seen it and carried it.

Dear brothers and sisters, no one can approach and touch the Cross of Jesus without leaving something of himself or herself there, and without bringing something of the Cross of Jesus into his or her own life. I have three questions that I hope will echo in your hearts this evening as you walk beside Jesus: **What have you left on the Cross, dear young people? What has the Cross of Jesus left for you, in each one of you? Finally, what does this Cross teach us?**

According to an ancient Roman tradition, while fleeing the city during the persecutions of Nero, Saint Peter saw Jesus who was travelling in the opposite direction, that is, toward the city, and asked him in amazement: "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus' response was: "I am going to Rome to be crucified again." At that moment, Peter understood that he had to follow the Lord with courage, to the very end. But he also realized that he would never be alone on the journey; Jesus, who had loved him even unto death, would always be with him.

**Jesus, with his Cross, walks with us and takes upon himself our fears, our problems, and our sufferings, even those which are deepest and most painful. With the Cross, Jesus unites himself to the silence of the victims of violence, those who can no longer cry out, especially the innocent and the defenceless; with the Cross, he is united to families in trouble, and those who mourn the tragic loss of their children.**

**On the Cross, Jesus is united with every person who suffers from hunger in a world which, on the other hand, permits itself the luxury of throwing away tons of food every day; on the Cross, Jesus is united to the many mothers and fathers who suffer as they see their children become victims of drug-induced euphoria; on the Cross, Jesus is united with those who are persecuted for their religion, for their beliefs or simply for the colour of their skin; on the Cross, Jesus is united with so many young people who have lost faith in political institutions, because they see in them only selfishness and corruption; he unites himself with those young people who have lost faith in the Church, or even in God because of the counter-witness of Christians and ministers of the Gospel. How our inconsistencies make Jesus suffer! The Cross of Christ bears the suffering and the sin of mankind, including our own. Jesus accepts all this with open arms, bearing on his shoulders our crosses and saying to us: "Have courage! You do not carry your cross alone! I carry it with you. I have overcome death and I have come to give you hope, to give you life" (cf. Jn 3:16).**

What has the Cross left in each one of us? You see, it gives us a treasure that no one else can give: the certainty of the faithful love which God has for us. A love so great that it enters into our sin and forgives it, enters into our suffering and gives us the strength to bear it. It is a love which enters into death to conquer it and to save us. The Cross of Christ contains all the love of God; there we find his immeasurable mercy. This is a love in which we can place all our trust, in which we can believe.

The Cross of Christ invites us also to allow ourselves to be smitten by his love, teaching us always to look upon others with mercy and tenderness, especially those who suffer, who are in need of help, who need a word or a concrete action; the Cross invites us to step outside ourselves to meet them and to extend a hand to them. How many times have we seen them in the Way of the Cross, how many times have they accompanied Jesus on the way to Calvary: Pilate, Simon of Cyrene, Mary, the women... Today I ask you: which of them do you want to be? Do you want to be like Pilate, who did not have the courage to go against the tide to save Jesus' life, and instead washed his hands? Tell me: are you one of those who wash their hands, who feign ignorance and look the other way? Or are you like Simon of Cyrene, who helped Jesus to carry that heavy wood, or like Mary and the other women, who were not afraid to accompany Jesus all the way to the end, with love and tenderness. **And you, who do you want to be? Like Pilate? Like Simon? Like Mary?** Jesus is looking at you now and is asking you: do you want to help me carry the Cross? Brothers and sisters, with all the strength of your youth, how will you respond to him?

\* \* \* \* \*

***Vigil of Prayer with young people, Copacabana beach, Friday 27<sup>th</sup> July 2013***

Dear young people, the real Campus Fidei, the field of faith, is your own heart, it is your life. It is your life that Jesus wants to enter with his word, with his presence. Please, let Christ and his word enter your life, blossom and grow.

[*Reflecting on the Parable of the Sower*] A field is a place for sowing seeds. Jesus tells us that the seed which fell on the path or on the rocky ground or among the thorns bore no fruit.



**What kind of ground are we? What kind of terrain do we want to be?** Maybe sometimes we are like the path: we hear the Lord's word but it changes nothing in our lives because we let ourselves be numbed by all the superficial voices competing for our attention; or we are like the rocky ground: we receive Jesus with enthusiasm, but we falter and, faced with difficulties, we don't have the courage to swim against the tide; or we are like the thorny ground: negativity, negative feelings choke the Lord's word in us.

But today I am sure that the seed is falling on good soil, that you want to be good soil, not part-time Christians, not "starchy" and superficial, but real. I am sure that you don't want to be duped by a false freedom, always at the beck and call of momentary fashions and fads. I know that you are aiming high, at long-lasting decisions which will make your lives meaningful. Jesus is capable of letting you do this: he is "the way, and the truth, and the life."

A field is a training ground. Jesus asks us to train, "to get in shape", so that we can face every situation in life undaunted, bearing witness to our faith. How do we get in shape? By talking with him: by prayer, which is our daily conversation with God, who always listens to us. By the sacraments, which make his life grow within us and conform us to Christ. By loving one another, learning to listen, to understand, to forgive, to be accepting and to help others, everybody, with no one excluded or ostracized. **Dear young people, be true "athletes of Christ"!**

A field is a construction site. In the Church of Jesus, we ourselves are the living stones. Jesus is asking us to build up his Church, but not as a little chapel which holds only a small group of persons. He asks us to make his living Church so large that it can hold all of humanity, that it can be a home for everyone! To me, to you, to each of us he says: "Go and make disciples of all nations". Tonight, let us answer him: Yes, I too want to be a living stone; together we want to build up the Church of Jesus! Let us all say together: I want to go forth and build up the Church of Christ!

**In your young hearts, you have a desire to build a better world. But the question remains: Where do we start? What are the criteria for building a more just society? Mother Teresa of Calcutta was once asked what needed to change in the Church. Her answer was: you and I!**

Dear friends, never forget that you are the field of faith! You are Christ's athletes! You are called to build a more beautiful Church and a better world.

\* \* \* \* \*

***Homily at the final Mass of World Youth Day, Copacabana Beach***

**"Go and make disciples of all nations"**. With these words, Jesus is speaking to each one of us, saying: "It was wonderful to take part in World Youth Day, to live the faith together with young people from the four corners of the earth, but now you must go, now you must pass on this experience to others." Jesus is calling you to be a disciple with a mission! Today, in the light of the word of God that we have heard, what is the Lord saying to us? Three simple ideas: Go, do not be afraid, and serve.

Go. The experience of this encounter must not remain locked up in your life or in the small group of your parish, your movement, or your community. That would be like withholding oxygen from a flame that was burning strongly. Faith is a flame that grows stronger the more it is shared and passed on, so that everyone may know, love and confess Jesus Christ, the Lord of life and history (cf. Rom 10:9).

**Where does Jesus send us? There are no borders, no limits: he sends us to everyone. Do not be afraid to go and to bring Christ into every area of life, to the fringes of society, even to those who seem farthest away, most indifferent.** The Lord seeks all, he wants everyone to feel the warmth of his mercy and his love. Do you know what the best tool is for evangelizing the young? Another young person. This is the path to follow!

Do not be afraid. Some people might think: "I have no particular preparation, how can I go and proclaim the Gospel?" My dear friend, your fear is not so very different from that of Jeremiah, a young man like you, when he was called by God to be a prophet: "Ah, Lord God! Behold, I do not know how to speak, for I am only a youth". God says the same thing to you as he said to Jeremiah: "Be not afraid ... for I am with you to deliver you" (Jer 1:7,8). He is with us!

Jesus did not say: "One of you go", but "All of you go": we are sent together. Dear young friends, be aware of the companionship of the whole Church and also the communion of the saints on this mission. I would like to address you, dear priests concelebrating with me at this Eucharist: you have come to accompany your young people, and this is wonderful, to share this experience of faith with them! But it is a stage on the journey. Please continue to accompany them with generosity and joy, help them to become actively engaged in the Church; never let them feel alone!

The final word: serve. **The life of Jesus is a life for others. It is a life of service. Evangelizing means bearing personal witness to the love of God: it is serving by bending down to wash the feet of our brethren, as Jesus did.**

**Three words: Go, do not be afraid, and serve. If you follow these three ideas, you will experience that the one who evangelizes is evangelized, the one who transmits the joy of faith receives joy.**

**Dear young friends, as you return to your homes, do not be afraid to be generous with Christ, to bear witness to his Gospel. Jesus Christ is counting on you! The Church is counting on you! The Pope is counting on you! May Mary, Mother of Jesus and our Mother, always accompany you with her tenderness: "Go and make disciples of all nations." Amen.**

*The venue for the next World Youth Day was announced at the end of Mass. WYD 2016 will take place in Krakow, Poland.*