

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY
OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO SYDNEY (AUSTRALIA) ON THE OCCASION
OF THE 23rd WORLD YOUTH DAY
(JULY 12 - 21, 2008)

MEETING WITH BENEFACTORS AND ORGANIZERS OF THE 23rd WYD

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI

Cathedral House
Sunday, 20 July 2008

Your Eminence,
Dear Friends,

As my visit to Australia draws to a close, I would like to express my gratitude to all those who helped make this World Youth Day a success. This evening, in a particular way, my thanks go to you, who have so generously supported this event both materially and spiritually. Cardinal Pell has alluded to the great sacrifices which you have made in organizing this wonderful day in the life of the Church. I thank you personally, not only for those sacrifices, but even more for the confidence you have shown in our young people and your trust in God's grace at work in their hearts. Let us pray that the investment which so many of you have made in them will bear fruit in their own lives, for the life of Christ's Church and for the future of our world!

In these days, through the work of the organizing committee and the cooperation of so many private individuals, businesses and corporations, and local authorities, young people from throughout the world have been given the opportunity to experience the beauty of this country and the warm hospitality of the Australian people. In return, they have enriched this land by their witness to the love of Christ and the power of his Spirit at work in the Church.

I am sure, dear friends, that your own participation in the preparations for this World Youth Day has given you a particular experience of the Holy Spirit's power. No doubt while planning this great international gathering, and trying to face every possible eventuality, you had your moments of worry and concern, and even fear and trepidation about how things would finally turn out! Now, in retrospect, you can see the abundant harvest which the Spirit has brought forth from your prayers, your perseverance and your hard work. How many good seeds have been sown in these short days!

Dear friends, Saint Paul, who devoted his entire life to the service of the Gospel, reminds us that "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (cf. *Acts* 20:35). Your generosity and sacrifice have been an essential, yet often hidden, ingredient in the success of this World

Youth Day. May the spiritual joy, the satisfaction and the fulfilment that we have all experienced in these days, be an unfailing source of blessings in your own lives. May you never doubt the truth of our Lord's promise that, whenever we give our creativity, energy, resources, and our very selves to him, we will gain them back abundantly (cf. *Mt* 19:29)!

With these sentiments I express once more my heartfelt gratitude and thanks to each of you. I commend you and your families to the loving intercession of Our Lady of the Southern Cross, Help of Christians, and cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing as a pledge of strength and peace in Jesus her divine Son.

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