



The Holy See

JOHN PAUL II

ANGELUS

Palm Sunday, 20 March 2005

The Holy Father was unable to preside at the special Concelebrated Mass in St Peter's Square, but appeared at his study window after the Eucharistic celebration, which was presided over by Cardinal Camillo Ruini, Vicar of Rome. Using an olive branch, the Pope blessed the numerous young people from Rome and around the world who had gathered with other pilgrims in the Square. Following the celebration of Holy Mass and prior to the noon recitation of the Angelus, Archbishop Leonardo Sandri, Substitute, read the Pope's Reflection to the pilgrims present.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

1. I greet you with great joy at the end of the solemn Palm Sunday celebration, and I thank Cardinal Camillo Ruini who has presided at it in my name.

Twenty years ago, right in this Square, the World Youth Days were initiated. Because of this, I address today in a particular way the young people: you who are present here, dear friends, and those in every part of the world.

2. Dear young people, the World Youth Meeting in Cologne, in the heart of Germany and Europe, will be taking place this coming August. In that city's marvellous cathedral the relics of the *Holy Magi* are venerated, so that in a certain sense they have become your guides on the way to that event. They came from the East to pay homage to Jesus and declared: "*We... have come to worship him*" (Mt 2: 2). These words, so rich in meaning, are the theme of your spiritual and catechetical journey towards World Youth Day.

Today, you *adore the Cross of Christ*, which you carry across the world, because you have believed in the love of God that was revealed in the crucified Christ.

3. Dear young people, I realize more and more how *providential and prophetic* it was that this very day, Palm Sunday and the Passion of the Lord, should have become your Day. This feast possesses a special grace, that of *joy united to the Cross*, which in itself sums up the Christian mystery.

Today, I tell you: continue unflaggingly on the journey on which you have set out in order to be *witnesses everywhere of the glorious Cross of Christ*. Do not be afraid! May the joy of the Lord, crucified and Risen, be your strength, and may Mary Most Holy always be beside you.

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