

MARISTS ON A JOURNEY

Catechetics 3/12

September 2012

THE GOAL IS WHAT GIVES MEANING: 2. THE WORLD YOUTH DAY



In the second catechetics we spoke of Brazil as the geographical goal of our pilgrimage. We will now refine the point a little more and speak of the EVENT as the goal: that is to say World Youth Day. (WYD)

World Youth Day is an international event when the Pope invites Catholic Youth to meet with him in order to confirm them in their faith.

Pope John Paul II convoked the first WYD in 1984 and each year he and now his successor Pope Benedict XVI, delivers a message to the youth of the world emphasizing different aspects of the faith as an important means of animating them. Every two

or three years these meetings are organized in different parts of the world and millions of youth come from all over the globe. And so beginning in Rome, Buenos Aires, Santiago de Compostela, Czestochowa, Denver, Manila, Paris, Rome, Toronto, Colonia, Sídney and Madrid we move towards the XXVIII edition in Río de

Janeiro. The Holy Fathers have very happily been present in these meetings which have been converted into a faith festival in the heart of the Church and without doubt one of the events most dear to the Pope's heart.

5 reasons to partake in a WYD

1. It is an opportunity to grow in the faith animated by the joyful testimony of thousands of young people.
2. It is a unique Church experience of catholicity, of internationality
3. It is a pilgrimage we can make with our friends and Marist groups and in this way get to know other young people from all over the world.
4. We will listen to and experience vocational testimonies and ways of giving service in the Church which will help us in our own discernment.
5. ... because in all this we meet Jesus and without doubt it will be an experience of God and of his love for the whole of humanity.

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Catechetics 3: walk with = discipleship.

PILGRIMAGE—JOURNEY



The meaning of the pilgrimage: accompanying and discipleship.

The pilgrim goes to a Holy Place: in the first centuries to the Holy Land, afterwards to the place of the Martyrs, Rome, or to the place of the Apostles, to the Marian shrines, or to those places which facilitate an encounter with God. The Pilgrim is invited to prepare during the whole journey to enter into this sacred experience. Even more, it must be said that the person has to allow herself/himself to be guided by the Spirit of Jesus himself, to listen anew to the Master. In these moments we recognize ourselves as needing a guide, recognize our limitations. The centre, the key to Christian spirituality is the following of Jesus. Journeying serves for nothing if it is not to recover the way and listen more attentively to Jesus. To journey in pilgrimage is a manifestation of the most profound desire to meet Jesus or to re-unite with Him.

Do you live your life as a follower of Jesus? Are you identified as a disciple of Jesus? Do you feel that He has invited you to follow Him? Do you follow Him or maybe have lost Him?

DISCIPLES OF JESUS



Prayerful listening to the Word

Discipleship expresses the fundamental relationship of the believer with Jesus. In other words and continuing with the second catechetics... we journey because we follow Him... and we follow Him because He calls us. Let's go to the Word... In your Bible look at chapter nine of Luke verse 23, where you will find one of the clearest descriptions of the following of Jesus: "In that time, Jesús said to the multitude: if anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him deny himself, take up his cross each day and follow me." It is a very small verse but it presents a very clear direction: whoever wants to be close to Jesus, whoever wants to know Him, to be His friend, His disciple.... Must follow Him; must walk behind Him. Two words are fundamental in this dynamic: closeness and movement. To follow signifies staying close to the person and this is possible thanks to the movement.

Does this verse speak to you? Are you or have you been close to Jesús? What relation has this closeness to movement within you? What does it mean for you to move, what does it imply?

MISIONARIES

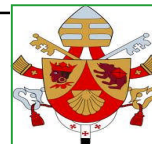


The spirit of the 'message to the Young people' from the Vatican II Council is without doubt the basic text of the World Day of Prayer." This message in spite of the fact that it was written 50 years ago still has an extraordinary freshness about it. Out of much love for the Young people The Council Fathers, in the name of the Church, have written this text which speaks of commitment and mission. We recommend that you look it up and read the complete text: here is just one paragraph.

"We greet you in the name of Christ, we exhort you and we bless you: because it is you who are going to receive the flame from the hands of your elders..... you will live through enormous transformations in history... seeking through them to build the society of the future; you will be saved or lost through them.... The Church hopes that you will find the strength and the joy to resist the temptations of the philosophy of egoism, pleasure, despair, ... you will know how to affirm your faith in life and in what gives life: the certainty of a just and good God. In the name of this God and of His Son Jesus, we invite you to open your heart to the dimensions of the world, to listen to the cry of your brothers and sisters, and to put yourself at their service with all your energies. ... to build with enthusiasm a better world than that of your elders. The Church looks upon us with confidence and love, look at her and contemplate the face of Christ the true hero in her, humble and wise, the prophet of truth and love the companion and the friend of youth."

THE VOICE OF THE POPE:

Always be joyful in the Lord! (Phil 4,4) PART 3.



We continue with the Pope's message to Young people written for World Youth Day 2012.

Dear Young People:

2. God is the source of true joy

Whatever brings us true joy, whether the small joys of each day or the greatest joys in life, has its source in God, even if this does not seem immediately obvious. This is because God is a communion of eternal love, he is infinite joy that does not remain closed in on itself, but expands to embrace all whom God loves and who love him. God created us in his image out of love, in order to shower his love upon us and to fill us with his presence and grace. God wants us to share in his own divine and eternal joy, and he helps us to see that the deepest meaning and value of our lives lie in being accepted, welcomed and loved by him. Whereas we sometimes find it hard to accept others, God offers us an unconditional acceptance which enables us to say: "I am loved; I have a place in the world and in history; I am personally loved by God. If God accepts me and loves me and I am sure of this, then I know clearly and with certainty that it is a good thing that I am alive".

God's infinite love for each of us is fully seen in Jesus Christ. The joy we are searching for is to be found in him. We see in the Gospel how the events at the beginning of Jesus' life are marked by joy. When the Archangel Gabriel tells the Virgin Mary that she is to be the mother of the Saviour, his first word is "Rejoice!" (*Lk 1:28*). When Jesus is born, the angel of the Lord says to the shepherds: "Behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a Saviour has been born for you, who is Messiah and Lord" (*Lk 2:10-11*). When the Magi came in search of the child, "they were overjoyed at seeing the star" (*Mt 2:10*). The cause of all this joy is the closeness of God who became one of us. This is what Saint Paul means when he writes to the Philippians: "Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice! Your kindness should be known to all. The Lord is near" (*Phil 4:4-5*). Our first reason for joy is the closeness of the Lord, who welcomes me and loves me.

An encounter with Jesus always gives rise to immense inner joy. We can see this in many of the Gospel stories. We recall when Jesus visited Zacchaeus, a dishonest tax collector and public sinner, he said to him: "Today I must stay at your house". Then, Saint Luke tells us, Zacchaeus "received him with joy" (*Lk 19:5-6*). This is the joy of meeting the Lord. It is the joy of feeling God's love, a love that can transform our whole life and bring salvation. Zacchaeus decides to change his life and to give half of his possessions to the poor. This profound joy is the fruit of the Holy Spirit that makes us sons and daughters of God, able to enjoy His goodness and to call Him Abba Father cf Rom 8: 15 Joy is the sign of his presence and his action in us.

*"Always
be joyful
in the
Lord"*

Reflect and share.

PHILOSOPHY:

"He who approaches the liberty of reason can only sense his presence on this earth as being on a journey."

Nietzsche

MARY DISCIPLE OF JESUS

We are accustomed to underlining Mary's primordial role as that of mother of Jesus. Theology has taught us this for many years.

After the second Vatican Council, which wanted to, as the message to the Young people explains, renew the face and heart of the Church highlighting Sacred Scripture as the place to rediscover Jesus and our faith. The biblical and theological reflection on Mary changed the emphasis to that of disciple above all others, not because these are not important or valid, they are, but rather because this allows us to come close to Mary in new way, more natural and original and to see her importance in the life of Jesus and of the early Christians. We discover Mary more as disciple of Jesus than mother, or Virgin Immaculate

etc.

Mary has made a precious journey in faith which speaks clearly to us today.

Mary like all the disciples of Jesus, went through a process of discovering her Son as Lord and Master.

Mary, coming from the Jewish tradition of faith from her childhood learned to be 'Christian', one of the first and without doubt the most perfect. This journey in faith was marked by doubts, uncertainty, suffering, questions... but also by the joy and happiness which Pope Benedict speaks about in his message.

The faith journey of Mary was one of following and listening to her Son, meditating on the Word,



being part of the community of disciples, without any pretence, but rather as a Sister to all. She knew, with the help of the Holy Spirit, how to pass from the faith she had inherited from her elders to a personal faith founded and strengthened by following as a disciple.

Mary, our Sister, accompany us on our journey.

This catechetics has as title and centre the following of Jesus as disciple this is the basis of our faith, and a sign and model for all pilgrimages.

What calls your attention? What do you like best? What do you discover about Jesus, his disciples, and especially about Mary that helps us in our preparation of our pilgrimage to Rio?

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Little by Little we are approaching the WYD 2013 and we need to begin the process of inscriptions or pre inscriptions. The team in Brazil are working hard too and they will soon let us know the exact cost. We can advance with the flight bookings because the earlier the better. The official site has already published more information useful regarding visas etc. Remember to visit the web page: <http://www.rio2013.com/pt/tire-suas-duvidas/inscricao> and to animate your friends to fill out the pre- inscription sheet attached to this catechetics. Please send it back to your congregational coordinator.