

In his message for the 38th World Youth Day, to be held at diocesan level on 26 November,

Pope Francis calls on young people TO BECOME SOWERS OF HOPE

Countering despair by being part of God's response

Youth is a time full of hopes and dreams, nourished by «the splendour of creation», personal relationships, scientific and technical knowledge, artistic and cultural experiences or initiatives aimed at peace, justice and fraternity. Yet for many people today, especially young people, «hope seems to be the great absentee». When you experience war, violence and harassment, how can you escape despair, fear and depression? Some young people, notes François, feel «as if they were locked up in a dark prison, unable to see the sun's rays», and certain high suicide rates are dramatic proof of this, he continues. In such a context, how can we contrast despair and a feeling of uselessness with the joy and hope of which Saint Paul speaks? We can be part of God's response,» says the Pope. «Created by him in his image and likeness, we can be an expression of his love, which gives rise to joy and hope even where it seems impossible. It is possible to kindle hope in people's hearts through Christian witness,» the Pope assures us.

A light in the night

Christian hope is not a denial of suffering and death. It is «neither easy optimism nor a placebo for the gullible», says Francis, but «a celebration of the love of the Risen Christ who is always with us, even when he seems far away». Christ is for us the great light of hope and the compass in our night,» he writes.

Taking care of the spark

The Pope invites young people to take care of their hope. He suggests that we take the time to pray, so that the spark that is lit within us is not smothered by everyday concerns. In this way, we can gain a sense of perspective and rediscover the sun, which is always present, even on grey days. Francis also suggests that young people adopt a lifestyle and concrete actions based on hope. On social networks, he invites them to share a word of hope every day rather than relaying bad news. In this way, they will become «sowers of hope». Christian hope is not a denial of suffering and death. It is «neither easy optimism nor a placebo for the gullible», says Francis, but «a celebration of the love of the Risen Christ who is always with us, even when he seems far away». Christ is for us the great light of hope and the compass in our night,» he writes.

Devenir un flambeau d'espérance pour autrui

Like a torch in the night, the light of hope that is Christ enables us to see everything in a new light,» says Francis. «Animated by divine hope, Christians are filled with a different kind of joy that comes from within» and, he sums up, they know that difficulties will not have the last word. The Pope invites us to bear witness to this Christian outlook in order to become «a little torch of hope for others», because for him, «we can only be happy by sharing the grace we have received». Hope cannot be protected like a treasure; it is «destined for everyone». Francis invites us in particular to take care of those around us, especially «our friends who may smile on the outside, but cry on the inside, who are poor in hope». He urges young people not to allow themselves to be contaminated by indifference and individualism, but to remain open «as channels through which the hope of Jesus can flow and spread in the environments in which you live».



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