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“Prophets of a New Age”

So referred Pope Benedict XVI to the young people at World Youth Day in Australia. We offer a summary, in 35 brief passages, of what the Holy Father said to them and to the youth of the world.

07/23/2008

1. “As the source of our new life in Christ, **the Holy Spirit is also, in a very real way, the soul of the Church**, the love that binds us to the Lord and to one another, and the

light that opens our eyes to see all around us the wonders of God's grace." (CM)

2. "We have to let God's love break through the hard crust of our indifference, our spiritual weariness, our blind conformity to the spirit of this age. Only then can we let it ignite our imagination and shape our deepest desires. **That is why prayer is so important:** daily prayer, private prayer in the quiet of our hearts and before the Blessed Sacrament, and liturgical prayer in the heart of the Church." (CM)

3. "Dear young people: What will you leave to the next generation? **Are you building your lives on firm foundations?** Are you living in a way that opens a space for the Spirit in the midst of a world that wants to forget God, or even rejects him in the name of a falsely-conceived freedom? How are you using the gifts

you have been given, the ‘power’ that the Holy Spirit is even now prepared to release within you?” (CM)

4. “A new generation of Christians is being called to help build a world in which God’s gift of life is welcomed, respected and cherished—not rejected, feared as a threat and destroyed. A new age in which love is not greedy or self-seeking, but pure, faithful and genuinely free, open to others, respectful of their dignity, seeking their good, radiating joy and beauty—a new age in which **hope liberates us from the shallowness**, apathy and self-absorption that deaden our souls and poison our relationships.” (CM)

5. “Dear young friends, **the Lord is asking you to be prophets of this new age**, messengers of his love, drawing people to the Father and building a future of hope for all humanity.” (CM)

6. “The world needs this renewal! In so many of our societies, side by side with material prosperity, a spiritual desert is spreading interior emptiness, unnamed fears, a quiet sense of despair. How many of our contemporaries have built broken and empty cisterns in a desperate search for meaning—the ultimate meaning that only love can give?....The Church also needs this renewal! **She needs your faith, your idealism and your generosity**, so that she can always be young in the Spirit!” (CM)

7. “**Do not be afraid to say ‘yes’ to Jesus**, to find your joy in doing his will, giving yourself completely to the pursuit of holiness, and using all your talents in the service of others!” (CM)

8. “ ‘There is more joy in giving than in receiving.’ **Never doubt** the truth of our Lord’s promise that whatever

we give him of our creativity, our resources, our persons, will come back to us in abundance.” (CM)

9. **“A harmonious relationship between religion and public life** is all the more important at a time when some people have come to consider religion a cause of division rather than a force for unity. In a world threatened by sinister and indiscriminate forms of violence, the unified voice of religious people urges nations and communities to resolve conflicts through peaceful means and with full regard for human dignity.” (IM)

10. “The religious sense planted within the human heart leads us to meet the needs of others and to search for concrete ways to contribute to the common good. Religion has a special role in this regard, for it teaches people that **authentic service requires**

sacrifice and self-discipline, which in turn must be cultivated through self-denial, temperance and a moderate use of the world's goods.” (IM)

11. “By reminding us of human finitude and weakness, religion also enjoins us **not to place our ultimate hope in this passing world.**” (IM)

12. “The true source of freedom is found in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. Christians believe **it is he who fully discloses the human potential for virtue and goodness, and it is he who liberates us from sin and darkness.**” (IM)

13. “You might think that in today's world people are unlikely to start worshipping other gods. But sometimes people do worship ‘other gods’ without realizing it. **False ‘gods’** are nearly always associated with the worship of three things:

material possessions, possessive love, or power.” (DY)

14. “**Material possessions** in themselves are good. We would not survive for long without money, clothing, shelter and food. Yet if we refuse to share what we have with the hungry and the poor, we make of our possessions a false god. How many voices in our materialist society tell us that happiness is to be found by acquiring as many possessions and luxuries as we can! But this is to make possessions into a false god. Instead of bringing life, they bring death.” (DY)

15. “Authentic love is obviously something good. **When we love we become most fully human.** But people often consider themselves loving when actually they are possessive or manipulative. People sometimes treat others as objects to satisfy their own needs. How easy it

is to be deceived by the many voices in our society that advocate a permissive approach to sexuality, without regard for modesty, self-respect or the moral values that bring quality into human relationships! This is worship of a false god; instead of bringing life, it brings death.” (DY)

16. “All through the Gospels, **it was those who had taken wrong turns who were particularly loved by Jesus** because once they recognized their mistake, they were all the more open to his healing message. It was those who were willing to rebuild their lives who were most ready to listen to Jesus and become his disciples. You can follow in their footsteps; you too can grow particularly close to Jesus because you have chosen to return to him.” (DY)

17. “We can be tempted **to make the life of faith a matter of mere sentiment**, thus blunting its power to inspire a consistent vision of the world and a rigorous dialogue with the many other visions competing for the minds and hearts of our contemporaries.” (MC)

18. “Walk in Christ’s light daily through fidelity to personal and liturgical prayer, nourished by meditation on the inspired word of God.... **Make the daily celebration of the Eucharist the center of your life.**” (MC)

19. “Celibacy for the sake of the Kingdom means embracing **a life completely devoted to love**, a love that enables you to commit yourselves fully to God’s service and to be totally present to your brothers and sisters, especially those in need.” (MC)

20. “Society today is being fragmented by a way of thinking that is inherently short-sighted because it disregards the full horizon of truth—the truth about God and about us. By its nature, **relativism fails to see the whole picture.** It ignores the very principles that enable us to live and flourish in unity, order and harmony.” (YV)

21. “The Holy Spirit! This is the Spirit’s role: to bring Christ’s work to fulfillment. Enriched with the Spirit’s gifts, you will have the power to move beyond the piecemeal, the hollow utopia, the fleeting, to offer **the consistency and certainty of Christian witness!**” (YV)

22. “**Love has a particular trait: it has a task or purpose to fulfill—to abide.** By its nature, love is enduring. The Holy Spirit offers our world love that dispels uncertainty; love that overcomes the fear of

betrayal; love that carries eternity within; the true love that draws us into a unity that abides!” (YV)

23. “**The Holy Spirit is God eternally giving himself**; like a never-ending spring he pours forth nothing less than himself. In view of this ceaseless gift, we come to see the limitations of all that perishes, the folly of the consumerist mindset. We begin to understand why the quest for novelty leaves us unsatisfied and wanting. Are we not looking for an eternal gift? For the spring that will never run dry?” (YV)

24. “Dear young people, we have seen that it is the Holy Spirit who brings about the wonderful communion of believers in Jesus Christ. True to his nature as giver and gift alike, he is even now working through you. Let *unifying love* be your measure; ***abiding love***

your challenge; self-giving love your mission!” (YV)

25. “You are called to exercise the Spirit’s gifts amidst the ups and downs of your daily life. **Let your faith mature through** your studies, work, sports, music and art. Let it be sustained by prayer and nurtured by **the sacraments.**” (YV)

26. “To be truly alive is to be transformed from within, open to the energy of God’s love. In accepting the power of the Holy Spirit you can also **transform your families, communities and nations.** Set free the gifts! Let wisdom, courage, awe and reverence be the marks of greatness!” (YV)

27. “Through the Spirit’s action may the young people gathered here have **the courage to become saints!** This is what the world needs more than anything else.” (GH)

28. “There is something sinister that stems from the fact that **freedom and tolerance are so often separated from truth**. This is fuelled by the notion, widely held today, that there are no absolute truths to guide our lives. Relativism, by indiscriminately giving value to practically everything, has made ‘experience’ all-important.” (PW)

29. “Life is not governed by chance; it is not random. **Your very existence has been willed by God, blessed and given a purpose!** Life is not just a succession of events or experiences. It is a search for the true, the good and the beautiful. It is to this end that we make our choices; it is for this that we exercise our freedom; it is in this—in truth, in goodness, and in beauty—that we find happiness and joy.” (PW)

30. “Do not be fooled by those who see you as **just another consumer** in

a market of undifferentiated possibilities, where choice itself becomes the good, novelty usurps beauty, and subjective experience displaces truth.” (PW)

31. **“Christ offers more! Indeed he offers everything!** Only he who is the Truth can be the Way and hence also he Life.” (PW)

32. “Many people today lack hope. They are perplexed by the questions that present themselves ever more urgently in a confusing world, and they are often uncertain which way to turn for answers. They see poverty and injustice and they long to find solutions. They are challenged by the arguments of those who deny the existence of God and they wonder how to respond.... **Where can we look for answers?** The Spirit points us towards the way that leads to life, to love and to truth. The Spirit points us towards Jesus Christ. In him we

find the answers we are seeking.” (YP)

33. “For [the Virgin] Mary there were many struggles ahead as she lived out the consequences of the ‘yes’ she had given to the Lord. Simeon prophesied that a sword would pierce her heart. When Jesus was twelve she experienced every parent’s worst nightmare when for three days the child was missing. And after his public ministry she suffered the agony of witnessing his crucifixion and death. Throughout her trials **she remained faithful to her promise**, sustained by the Spirit of fortitude. And she was generously rewarded.” (AC)

34. “We too must remain **faithful to the ‘yes’ we have given to the Lord’s offer of friendship**. We know that he will never abandon us. We know that he will always sustain us through the gifts of the Spirit. Mary

accepted the Lord's 'proposal' in our name. So let us turn to her and ask her to guide us as we struggle to remain faithful to the life-giving relationship God has established with each one of us." (AC)

35. "The time has come for me to say good-bye—or better, '*arrivederci!*'... World Youth Day 2011 will take place in Madrid, Spain. Until then, let us continue to pray for one another, and **let us joyfully bear witness to Christ before the world.**" (AC)

*The above passages are taken from the following addresses and homilies:
CM Closing Mass (7/19/08) IM Inter-religious Meeting (7/17/08) DY Disadvantaged Youth (7/18/08) MC Mass with the Clergy (7/18/08) YV Youth Day Vigil (7/19/08) GH Government House Ceremony (7/16/08) PW Papal Welcome (7/17/08) YP Young Pilgrims (7/13/08) AC*

Angelus following the Closing Mass
(7/19/08)

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