

World Youth Day Begins

The programme includes the presence of Pope Francis in Fatima, on Saturday 5 August, where he will pray with young people with disabilities and young prisoners.

A Mass presided over by the Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon, Manuel Clemente, this afternoon officially opened the World Youth Day Lisbon 2023, which will bring together hundreds of thousands of young people in Portugal until Sunday, 6 August. The Eucharistic Celebration took place on the Hill of Encounter, in Eduardo VII Park, Lisbon, and was attended by thousands of young people.

In his homily, the Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon invited young people to go out to their neighbours, bringing Christ, in a dynamic of sincere and fraternal welcome.

Monsignor Manuel Clemente presented a reflection based on three points from the story of the Visitation of Mary – the theme of the World Youth Day in Lisbon – which he considered as “an evangelical step that involves” the whole Church.

The prelate began by stressing the importance of the dynamic of the journey in one's personal life, warning against the danger of "substituting the true reality, which can only be reached on the move towards others, with the virtual appearance of the world of one's choice, in front of a screen".

"Virtuality keeps us sitting in front of means that easily use us, when we think we use them. On the contrary, consistent reality sets us on the road to meet others and the world as it is, both to admire it and to make it better," he explained, urging young people to walk with Jesus, bringing Him to others, with the "same impulse that drove Mary".

Recalling Mary's haste on her way to the home of her cousin Elizabeth, the president of the celebration emphasised the "urgency of proclamation, witness and ongoing visitation to others".

"Dear young people, you know very well that when the heart is full, it quickly overflows. (...) Mary was carrying with her Jesus himself, whom she had conceived, (...) hence her haste to bring him to Elizabeth, even climbing mountains. You know this haste, because others have also hastened to meet you to bring Jesus to you. (...) This haste is a serene and unhurried urgency, the same as the one which brought you here and will make you stay here, bringing to others what it brought to you".

Finally, Archbishop Manuel Clemente emphasised the importance of fraternal welcome, starting from the "true and joyful" greeting that Mary gave to Elizabeth when she arrived at Zechariah's house.

"Each of our meetings must begin with a true welcome, in which we exchange words of sincere greeting and full sharing. (...) Let us learn, with Mary, to greet each and every one. Let us practise it intensely during the days of this WYD. The new world begins in the newness of each encounter and in the truth of the greeting we exchange, so that we may be people among people, in mutual and constant visitation," he concluded, wishing the thousands of young people gathered in the assembly a "happy and inspiring" Day.

The Pope arrives in Lisbon tomorrow, Wednesday, a day dedicated to institutional contacts and to the clergy and pastoral agents. On Saturday, at the express wish of Pope Francis, he will travel to the Shrine of Fatima to pray for peace with young people with disabilities and with young prisoners, in the Little Chapel of the Apparitions.

PHOTOS: © Lusa | Miguel Lopes

TAGS: #viverfatimanajmj
www.fatima.pt/en/news/world-youth-day-begins