

## E-BULLETIN #79

*"Let the holiness of God shine forth" (cf. Mt 5, 16)*

item 149



**‘...until Christ be formed in you’**

**two travellers – one message!**

‘Let us spare no effort in the formation of our young people! Saint Paul uses an expression that he embodied in his own life, when he addressed the Christian community: “My little children, with whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you” (Gal 4:19).

‘Let us embody this also in our own ministry! To help our young people to discover the courage and joy of faith, the joy of being loved personally by God, is very difficult. But when young people understand it, when young people experience it through the anointing of the Holy Spirit, this “being personally loved by God” accompanies them for the rest of their lives. They rediscover the joy that God gave his Son Jesus for our salvation. Let us form them in mission, to go out, to go forth, to be itinerants who communicate the faith. Jesus did this with his own disciples: he did not keep them under his wing like a hen with her chicks. He sent them out! We cannot keep ourselves shut up in parishes, in our communities, in our parish or diocesan institutions, when so many people are waiting for the Gospel! To go out as ones sent. It is not enough simply to open the door in welcome because they come, but we must go out through that door to seek and meet the people! Let us urge our young people to go forth.

‘Of course, they will make mistakes, but let us not be afraid! The Apostles made mistakes before us. Let us urge them to go forth. Let us think resolutely about pastoral needs, beginning on the outskirts, with those who are farthest away, with those who do not usually go to church. They are the VIPs who are invited. Go and search for them at the crossroads.

'To be called by Jesus, to be called to evangelize and, especially, to be called to promote the culture of encounter – In many places, due to the economic humanism that has been imposed in the world, the culture of exclusion, of rejection, is spreading. There is no place for the elderly or for the unwanted child; there is no time for that poor person in the street. At times, it seems that for some people, human relations are regulated by two modern “dogmas”: efficiency and pragmatism.

'Dear Bishops, priests, religious and you, seminarians who are preparing for ministry: have the courage to go against the tide of this culture. Be courageous! Remember this, which helps me a great deal and on which I meditate frequently: take the First Book of Maccabees, and recall how many of the people wanted to adapt to the culture of the time: “No ...! Leave us alone! Let us eat of everything, like the others do... Fine, yes to the Law, but not every part of it ...”. And they ended up abandoning the faith and placing themselves in the current of that culture. Have the courage to go against the tide of this culture of efficiency, this culture of waste. Encountering and welcoming everyone, solidarity – a word that is being hidden by this culture, as if it were a bad word – solidarity and fraternity: these are what make our society truly human.



'Be servants of communion and of the culture of encounter! I would like you to be almost obsessed about this. Be so without being presumptuous, imposing “our truths”, but rather be guided by the humble yet joyful certainty of those who have been found, touched and transformed by the Truth who is Christ, ever to be proclaimed (cf. Lk 24:13-35).

'Dear brothers and sisters, God calls us, by name and surname, each one of us, to proclaim the Gospel and to promote the

culture of encounter with joy. The Virgin Mary is our exemplar. In her life she was “a model of that motherly love with which all who join in the Church’s apostolic mission for the regeneration of humanity should be animated” ( [Lumen Gentium](#), 65). Let us ask her to teach us to encounter one another in Jesus every day. And when we pretend not to notice because we have many things to do and the tabernacle is abandoned, may she take us by the hand. Let us ask this of her!

*Watch over me, Mother, when I am disoriented, and lead me by the hand. May you spur us on to meet our many brothers and sisters who are on the outskirts, who are hungry for God but have no one to proclaim him.*

*May you not force us out of our homes, but encourage us to go out so that we may be disciples of the Lord. May you grant all of us this grace”.*

**Pope Francis,  
MASS WITH BISHOPS, PRIESTS, RELIGIOUS AND SEMINARIANS  
Cathedral of San Sebastian, Rio de Janeiro  
Saturday – 27.07.13**

## living paradox: a pilgrim's reflections on World Youth Day 2013

Attending the opening Mass of WYD 2013 on Copacabana Beach, I was blown away by the vibrancy, the joy and the sheer mass of humanity. Never will you see so many different national flags in one place - though, paradoxically, in that same place, an event takes place that renders nationality irrelevant.

Here, people from all races and nations gather to pray and have Mass. Holy Communion has never been more literal or tangible to me than when I am standing among hundreds of people from twelve different countries lining up to receive the Eucharist. Everything in Rio is in Portuguese, so suffice to say it is a struggle to understand anything that is going on. However, we come to Mass and suddenly everything makes sense again. I know which prayers are being said, I know when to stand, to sit and to kneel as if I was at my regular parish Mass. The power of seeing thousands of flags fall still as everyone kneels at the consecration renders all our differences irrelevant. Here we are, kneeling before the sacrifice of a Jewish carpenter and we are one. We are one body, one Church, one people.

Catholicism is paradoxical. When one grasps this, both World Youth Day and the Catholic Church begin to make much more sense. The fact of the matter is the Catholic Church is not dying. I challenge anyone who announces the death of Catholicism (and religious belief in general) to come and see a World Youth Day. World Youth Day is a life-changing experience; it is not something you leave behind in the host country. This year's theme clearly emphasises this fact: "Go ... and make disciples of all nations." What does this mean? It means go home and be a paradox! Stand firm on principles in all matters, but always love your neighbour first. Participate actively and joyfully in those inane, backward Catholic practices that can often seem boring and old fashioned. But above all, live the paradox that the Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta discovered: "Love until it hurts, then there is no more hurt; only love."



Pope Francis is our model of the living paradox of Catholicism. Here is a Jesuit, taking the name of St Francis of Assisi. Here is a man with access to the beauty and comfort of the Papal facilities, but refusing them. Here is a man who asks for very little, but gives everything of himself in humble service to every person he meets. Here is a man who is thoroughly well educated and learned, but always seeks to learn from others first.

Pope Francis, the living paradox, will undoubtedly leave a deep impression on all of us. The last two Popes have been calling for a "New Evangelisation" and now, finally, I think I know what that nebulous term means. It means to be a paradox, to love Jesus and to live according to his teachings. It means to love the Church despite the flaws, imperfections and downright evil actions of some of its members. When we live with Jesus at the centre of our lives, people notice. That is the essence of evangelisation - to answer the challenge of St Francis: "Preach the gospel always and, if necessary, use words."

This is why Pope John Paul II created World Youth Day - to offer a concrete invitation to young people to become witnesses and to evangelise just by gathering together for Mass with the Pope. The impact of that experience has long-lasting effect on the faith of the pilgrims and their life. Husbands have met their wives, priests, nuns, brothers and singles have found their vocations and purpose in life, and deep friendships are formed.



Re-fuelled and on fire with this incredible experience, we return home to the normal, quiet routine. Whether it takes a week or ten years for the full effect of a World Youth Day experience to bear fruit, it always does. It has and is continuing to have a lasting effect on the host nation and on the travelling pilgrims.

Nietzsche announced "God is dead." I, along with a few million other Catholics here in Rio, would like politely to disagree. He is very much alive and is calling new disciples every day. He is calling us, and we have answered because we are the Church - not in the future, but the right here, right now. To those who might be just a little cynical about the whole thing, I extend a simple invitation to you: come and see!

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**ABC – RELIGION and ETHICS**  
**26.07.13**

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## sac asia oceania e-bulletin

**you commented...**

**on #78**

Greetings to you. Thanks for the wonderful mails you send me.	SI	29.07.13
Very inspiring! May God bless her family	TC	29.07.13