

FAITH AND REASON

Pope Francis at WYD Stations of the Cross: 'Jesus wipes away our hidden tears: Pope Francis told the estimated 800,000 young people praying the Stations of the Cross together at World Youth Day in Portugal on Friday evening that Jesus can open the windows of the soul and wipe away all "hidden tears." Speaking outdoors in Lisbon's Eduardo VII Park, the Pope asked the crowd to spend a moment in silence to "tell Jesus what makes you cry in life." "Jesus is with us. He cries with us. Because he accompanies us in the darkness that leads us to tears," he said.

"Jesus, with his tenderness, wipes away our hidden tears. Jesus hopes to fill our loneliness with his closeness."

For each of the 14 stations, a performance troupe acted out choreography from the top of the stage's high scaffolding, at times performing aerial stunts while hanging from ropes, as the World Youth Day cross was passed around the stage.

The Via Crucis meditations connected Christ's sufferings to wounds that young people experience today from mental health struggles, addition, and anxiety about their future. Pope Francis was brought out on stage in a wheelchair and addressed the crowd at the beginning of the Way of the Cross saying: "You are going to walk with Jesus today." "The path that is most engraved in our hearts is the path of Calvary, the path of the cross and today you go with prayer to relive the path of the cross. And let's look at Jesus passing by and walk with him," he said, choosing to speak entirely off script rather than reading his prepared speech. Young people from Portugal, Spain, and the United States shared video testimonies projected on a large video screen between some of the meditations. "Approaching my high school graduation, my parents went through a horrendous divorce and my world spiraled out of control. I sank deep into depression, I struggled with self-harm, became a drug addict, and had a desire to end my life," he said as the crowd prayed the ninth station, "Jesus falls for the third time." "I let my pain lead me to embracing my selfish desires. Everything I had known was gone, and I had no sense of direction. My head was in such a dark place from all the pain, and I searched for a reason to live. "To make a long story short, it was the message of John 6, Jesus in the Eucharist, that brought me home into full communion with the Catholic Church," he said. "After embracing the identity that my heavenly Father has given me, the wounds I have had have finally started to heal. Being united fully to Jesus in the Eucharist is what has brought healing to my soul. After tasting all that this world has to offer, he is the only one who has satisfied me." At the end of the final station, Pope Francis gave a blessing to all present. The Way of the Cross concluded the Pope's second day of World Youth Day events. On Saturday morning, Pope Francis will travel by helicopter to Fátima, where he will pray the rosary with young people suffering from illnesses in the Marian shrine's Chapel of Apparitions. In his prepared remarks for the Stations of the Cross, Pope Francis wrote that Jesus desires to free souls from the despair caused by sin and to let in the fullness of his life and love. "The cross that is present at every celebration of World Youth Day is the icon of this journey. It is the sacred sign of the greatest love of all, the love with which Christ wants to embrace our lives," he wrote. "To Jesus, whose side was pierced for our sake, let us open our hearts. Let us put our trust in him. May the stream of blood and water that flowed from his side bath, purify, and transform us. May it make us passionate prophets of the Gospel and intrepid witnesses of hope."

Christ our Divine Guest: Now when we have received our Lord in Holy Communion, we have Him in our body, we must not then leave him alone as we get involved in other things, forgetting to look to him anymore. For anyone who would serve a guest in such a way would have little sense. Instead, we must let all our concerns be focused on him. Let us talk to him by devout prayer, converse with him by devout meditation.

Let us say with the prophet: "I will hear what the Lord will speak within me" (Ps 85). For surely, if we set aside all things and attend to him, he will not fail to inspire us. He will speak to us about such things within us that will lead to the great spiritual comfort and profit of our soul. So let us make sure as did Martha in the Gospel that all our outward business may pertain to him. Let us provide cheer to him and to his company for his sake... namely the poor.

For whatever is done for every one of these, he considers it to be done not only for one of his disciples, but also for himself. For he himself said: "For, what you have done for one of these the least my brethren, you have done for me" (Mt 25). And with Martha's sister, Mary; let us also sit in devout meditation and listen well to what our Savior; being now our guest will inwardly say to us.... **St Thomas More**

Thus says the Lord: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, let not the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, says the Lord.... **Jeremiah 9:23-24**

Do not neglect your children's religious education. I urge you to continue with the same zeal for spiritual teaching that you have shown here in the assembly. Do not display such enthusiasm here only, but also when you are at home. Talk over these matters with your husband, wife, and family. Make comments yourselves and let other family members respond. In this way everyone will contribute and profit. Do not tell me that children should not be occupied with religious matters. They should not only be occupied but eager to focus on them.

Of these seven days each week, you should dedicate one at the Lord of us all. After all we do not think it unreasonable to expect our domestic help to work for us all the time. So, shouldn't we ourselves apportion to our Master at least of our leisure time for God? This is the case especially when we consider that all our service is of no profit to him since he needs nothing. In fact, our service to him turns out to be to our own advantage.

Why is it that, if you are expected to have your children spend more time for the sake of spiritual gain, you call the matter a waste of time? And can you escape angering God if you find time for their leisure, and find ways to justify everything they do, you think it troublesome and unreasonable for your children to take in hand matters concerning Him? Do not do that, brothers and sisters; do not do it. It is at this very age when children need most of all to hear these things. In their simplicity they readily store up in their hearts these things. What they hear is expressed on their minds like a seal of wax. Besides it is now that their life begins to incline towards vice or virtue... **St John Chrysostom**

A Thought For the Day

Sunday	Jesus wants to live his life in you, to look through your eyes, love with your heart.
Monday	Without love, deeds, even the most brilliant, count as nothing.
Tuesday	The heart preparing to receive the Holy Eucharist should be like a crystal vase.
Wednesday	Charity is no substitute for justice withheld.
Thursday	Miracles are not contrary to nature but only contrary to what we know about nature.
Friday	What the soul is in the body, let Christians be in the world.
Saturday	In confession there is mercy. Believe it firmly, do not doubt, do not hesitate, never despair of the mercy of God.

I realize as never before that the Lord is gentle and merciful; He did not send me this heavy cross until I could bear it. If He had sent it before, I am certain that it would have discouraged me... I desire nothing at all now except to love until I die of love. I am free, I am not afraid of anything, not even of what I used to dread most of all.. a long illness which would make me a burden to the community. I am perfectly content to go on suffering in body and soul for years if that would please God. I am not in the least afraid of living for a long time; I am ready to go on fighting... **St. Therese of Lisieux**

Finding the center of Things: We all of us tend at every moment to put ourselves in the place of God, by setting ourselves at the center of the universe. The new-born infant comes into the world as the center of his own universe, and all his education will consist in learning that he is not the center of things. Yet every time we mention Original Sin, we ought also to mention original righteousness; this is the other side of the paradox. The vestiges of the divine image remain in us; we know that we are self-centered; and we know that self-centeredness is wrong. No man-made technique of psychology or pedagogy can completely adjust us to society; our closest need is for community, for reconciliation, for right relationships with our fellow men and with God. We need a salvation that no human technique can bring... **Alan Richardson**

Walking by faith, let us do good works. In these let there be a free love of God for His own sake and an active love for our neighbor. For there is nothing we can do for God. But because we have something we can do for our neighbor, we shall by our good offices to the needy gain the favor of Him Who is the source of all abundance. Let us then do what we can for others; let us freely bestow upon the needy out of our abundance... **St. Augustine**

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