

Welcome to Antonian. Each of you have been selected by name to be at Antonian and for a long time we have been praying for you and now you are here. In a few weeks you will begin the formal part of your education. Although you have been through eight to ten years of schooling already, your experience has not been anything like what you will experience in the next four years. The next four years will be a blessing, a time when you will be able to fulfill your every hope and dream. You have to begin today to know what it is you want and what it is that you will become. It is not ok to just simply go through the days and the weeks and the months and the years and get to the end wishing that you would have done this or done that. Some of the things that will happen will be so simple that you may not even pay attention to it. However, I want to ask you to notice everything, to be inquisitive about anything and to dare to fulfill the dream. You must value all of your experiences so that you do not waste an opportunity that may bring reflection and may cause an opportunity in you to become.

TELL STUDENTS ABOUT THE JELLO AND CLAY STORY

I invite you to think of the time at Antonian as a trip that will take four years and the goal of this trip is to prepare you for a future that you do not know and a person that are to become. You need to begin to think what you need to pack so that when you are ready to make the trip at the end of your senior year, you will have everything you need and then, the trip will be easier to make and may also be more successful.

Next, I want to talk with you about doing good. As your Principal I want you to understand my role and the role of your teachers. I am here in loco parentis. Does anyone know what that means? In loco parentis means in place of parents. What this means then is that as your Principal, I am here as are your teachers, in place of your parents – to love you, to care for you and also to continue to teach you between right and wrong, to correct you and to assure that your travel through Antonian provides benefit to you.

You know as Catholics we all have heard about the soul. Your parents may have told you about the soul or you may have heard about it in Religion class. Does anyone know what the soul is or where it resides?

The soul is that special place at the center of your being where God resides.

And so every day that you walk through the halls of Antonian I want you to consider it Holy ground – a place that God has blessed and a place where your faith will become strong. You can walk through these halls and talk bad about your friends or turn and be mean to one another. This is not what we want and certainly it is not something that you want for yourselves or for one another. Perhaps in your experience of school there have been times that you wish would not have happened to you or to your friends. Yes, all of us have these times. Well, there is an opportunity today and for the next four years to have an environment, a school where all will be great. You can make a commitment today to help Antonian be this special place where there is no talking about one another or a place where friends hurt one another. It can be that special place called home and the place that is holy ground.

TELL STUDENTS THE STORY ABOUT JESUS AND HOSPITALITY – Guests and Hosts.

Lastly, let me ask you another question. Where does love reside – in the brain or in the heart? I will let you spend a minute thinking about that question and then give you the answer.

Love does not live in the brain and it does not live in the heart. You know where it lives – it lives in the WILL. And let me tell you why.

Love is the result of decisions you make – yea love certainly has an emotional side regulated by the heart and it does have a mental side regulated by the brain, but love cannot be made whole until your will decides if it is or if it is not. **And so, I ask that you strengthen your WILL. It is your WILL that will regulate much of what you do over the next four years until the time when thoughts turn into desires and desires turn into action and actions turn into habits and habits become virtues.** Then at the end of your years at Antonian, your character will be formed and you will no longer be that individual that is just like JELLO but a person of CLAY, well formed and well principles.

When I was telling a friend some of what I was going to tell you today, she said to me – how boring. But I told her, it may be boring but I think these new freshmen can understand what it is I will try to tell them. When I met them last they seemed mature to understand the message.

And so, my dear freshmen students, take all I said today and become inspired to be the person you want to be.

In four years one of you will be valedictorian – the number one person in the class who achieved the highest grades in the class – who will that person be??

In four years one of you girls and one of you boys will be awarded with the male athlete and female athlete of the year award. Who will that be??

In four years one of you boys and one of you girls will be awarded be awarded with the Archbishop's medallion for being a good Christian and an individual of serve to your fellow classmates, to your parish and to society in general. Who will that be??

In four years, three of you will be National Merit Scholars, Five of you will be National Commended Scholars and ten of you will be National Hispanic Scholars. Who will those students be??

In four years, five to ten of you will be admitted into Notre Dame. Who will those students be??

In four years, fifty of you will be admitted into Texas A&M University. Who will you be??

In four years, forty of you will be admitted into the University of Texas. Who will that be??

You can accomplish anything you want to accomplish and we will help you to become if you follow these simple guidelines I outlined for you today. **Let this be Holy Ground, be friendly, be respectful, be loyal to your friends and to your school, be simple, have strength, be sober and prudent, as it relates to promiscuity and love. And most important of all – do only those things which will bring you closer**

to heaven – Our goal is certainly to assist you in gaining entrance into your college of your choice. But don't forget, the goal also is to assist your parents to get you into heaven.

This means to trust in yourself, to strengthen your will and to live a positive life separate from what your friends think or what they wish you to do or to be.

I will be praying for you over the next few weeks and ask God to take you into his hands and guide you and your parents during these four years and beyond.

SUMMARY:

- Message for World Youth Day 2008

MESSAGE FOR WORLD YOUTH DAY 2008

VATICAN CITY, JUL 26, 2007 (VIS) - Benedict XVI's Message for 23rd World Youth Day, due to be held in Sydney, Australia from July 15 to 20, 2008, has as its theme: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses" (Acts of the Apostles 1, 8).

The Message is dated July 20 in Lorenzago di Cadore, Italy. Given below are excerpts from the English translation, which was made public yesterday:

1. The XXIII World Youth Day

"The underlying theme of the spiritual preparation for our meeting in Sydney is the Holy Spirit and mission. ... In this message I gladly offer you an outline for meditation that you can explore during this year of preparation. In this way you can test the quality of your faith in the Holy Spirit, rediscover it if it is lost, strengthen it if it has become weak."

2. The promise of the Holy Spirit in the Bible

"Attentive listening to the Word of God concerning the mystery and action of the Holy Spirit opens us up to great and inspiring insights. ... The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the nascent Church was the fulfilment of a promise made much earlier by God, announced and prepared throughout the Old Testament."

"In 'the fullness of time,' the angel of the Lord announced to the Virgin of Nazareth that the Holy Spirit, 'the power of the Most High,' would come upon her and overshadow her. The Child to be born would be holy and would be called Son of God. ... Before His death on the Cross, He would tell His disciples several times about the coming of the Holy Spirit, the 'Consoler' Whose mission would be to bear witness to Him and to assist believers by teaching them and guiding them to the fullness of Truth."

3. Pentecost, the point of departure for the Church's mission

On the day of Pentecost "the Holy Spirit renewed the Apostles from within, filling them with a power that would give them courage to go out and boldly proclaim that 'Christ has died and is risen!' Freed from all fear, they began to speak openly with self-confidence. These frightened fishermen had become courageous heralds of the Gospel. Even their enemies could not understand how 'uneducated and ordinary men' could show such courage and endure difficulties, suffering and persecution with joy. Nothing could stop them."

4. The Holy Spirit, soul of the Church and principle of communion

"The Holy Spirit is the highest gift of God to humankind, and therefore the supreme testimony of His love for us, a love that is specifically expressed as the 'yes to life' that God wills for each of His creatures. This 'yes to life' finds its fullness in Jesus of Nazareth and in His victory over evil by means of the redemption."

5. The Holy Spirit as "Teacher of the interior life"

"My dear young friends, the Holy Spirit continues today to act with power in the Church, and the fruits of the Spirit are abundant in the measure in which we are ready to open up to this power that makes all things new. ... However, at this point a question naturally arises: who is the Holy Spirit for me? It is a fact

that for many Christians He is still the 'great unknown.' This is why, as we prepare for the next World Youth Day, I wanted to invite you to come to know the Holy Spirit more deeply at a personal level."

"The Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the love of the Father and of the Son, is the Source of life that makes us holy. ... Nevertheless, it is not enough to know the Spirit; we must welcome Him as the guide of our souls, as the 'Teacher of the interior life' Who introduces us to the Mystery of the Trinity, because He alone can open us up to faith and allow us to live it each day to the full. The Spirit impels us forward towards others, enkindles in us the fire of love, makes us missionaries of God's charity."

6. The Sacraments of Confirmation and the Eucharist

"Faith is born and is strengthened within us through the Sacraments, particularly those of Christian initiation: Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist. ... This truth concerning the three Sacraments that initiate our lives as Christians is perhaps neglected in the faith life of many Christians. They view them as events that took place in the past and have no real significance for today, like roots that lack life-giving nourishment. ... Yet it is through the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and then, in an ongoing way, the Eucharist, that the Holy Spirit makes us children of the Father, brothers and sisters of Jesus, members of His Church, capable of a true witness to the Gospel, and able to savour the joy of faith."

"Nowadays it is particularly necessary to rediscover the Sacrament of Confirmation and its important place in our spiritual growth. ... Confirmation gives us special strength to witness to and glorify God with our whole lives. It makes us intimately aware of our belonging to the Church, the 'Body of Christ,' of which we are all living members, in solidarity with one another."

"I would like to add a word about the Eucharist. In order to grow in our Christian life, we need to be nourished by the Body and Blood of Christ. ... 'Source and summit' of the Church's life, the Eucharist is a 'perpetual Pentecost' since every time we celebrate Mass we receive the Holy Spirit Who unites us more deeply with Christ and transforms us into Him."

7. The need and urgency of mission

"Many young people view their lives with apprehension and raise many questions about their future. They anxiously ask: How can we fit into a world marked by so many grave injustices and so much suffering? ... How can we give full meaning to life? ... Let us not forget that the greater the gift of God - and the gift of the Spirit of Jesus is the greatest of all - so much the greater is the world's need to receive it and therefore the greater and the more exciting is the Church's mission to bear credible witness to it. ... Once again I repeat that only Christ can fulfil the most intimate aspirations that are in the heart of each person. Only Christ can humanize humanity and lead it to its 'divinization.' Through the power of His Spirit He instils divine charity within us, and this makes us capable of loving our neighbour and ready to be of service. ... There are those who think that to present the precious treasure of faith to people who do not share it means being intolerant towards them, but this is not the case, because to present Christ is not to impose Him.

"Moreover, two thousand years ago twelve Apostles gave their lives to make Christ known and loved. Throughout the centuries since then, the Gospel has continued to spread by means of men and women inspired by that same missionary fervour. Today too there is a need for disciples of Christ Who give unstintingly of their time and energy to serve the Gospel. ... In particular, I assure you that the Spirit of Jesus today is inviting you young people to be bearers of the good news of Jesus to your contemporaries. ... You know the ideals, the language, and also the wounds, the expectations, and at the same time the desire for goodness felt by your contemporaries. This opens up the vast world of young people's emotions, work, education, expectations, and suffering. Each one of you must have the courage to promise the Holy Spirit that you will bring one young person to Jesus Christ in the way you consider best, knowing how to 'give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope, but [to] do it with gentleness and reverence'."

8. Invoking a 'new Pentecost' upon the world

"My dear young friends, I hope to see very many of you in Sydney in July 2008. ... Together we shall invoke the Holy Spirit, confidently asking God for the gift of a new Pentecost for the Church and for humanity in the third millennium."
MESS/WORLD YOUTH DAY/... VIS 070726 (1410)

