



Do Not Be Afraid

Do not be afraid: God will always be with you! With his help you will be able to find the paths that lead to the heart of every person.

Homily, 2 May 2004

Dear friends, I ask the Lord to be a witness of hope among you, a witness of that hope which “does not disappoint,” because it is founded on God’s love “poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us” (Rom 5:5). Today, the world is especially in need of an extra measure of hope!

Homily, 6 June 2004

Do not be afraid of being opposed by the world! Jesus has assured us, “I have conquered the world!” (Jn 16:33).

Do not be afraid even of your own weakness and inadequacy! ... Communicate the message of Christ’s hope, grace and love, keeping always alive, in this passing world, the eternal perspective of heaven.

Apostolic Letter
The Rapid Development
24 January 2005

Ten years ago, in *Tertio Millennio Adveniente* (10 November 1994), I had the joy of proposing to the Church a program of preparation for the *Great Jubilee of the Year 2000*. It seemed to me that this historic moment presented itself as a great grace. I realized, of course, that a simple chronological event, however evocative, could not by itself bring about great changes. Unfortunately the millennium began with events which were in tragic continuity with the past, and often with its worst aspects. A scenario emerged which, despite certain positive elements, is marred by acts of violence and bloodshed which cause continued concern. Even so, in inviting the Church to celebrate the Jubilee of the two-thousandth anniversary of the Incarnation, I was convinced — and I still am, more than ever! — that this celebration would be of benefit to humanity in the long term.

Apostolic Letter
Mane nobiscum Domine (I, 6)
7 October 2004

There is another challenge that I wish to mention: *the challenge of freedom*. All of you know how important this is to me, especially because of the history of my native people....

Freedom is a great good, because only by freedom can human beings find fulfillment in a manner befitting their nature. Freedom is like light. It enables us to choose responsibly our proper goals and the right means of achieving them.

Address to the Diplomatic Corps
Accredited to the Holy See
10 January 2005

There need be no fear that legitimate religious freedom would limit other freedoms or be injurious to the life of civil society. On the contrary, together with religious freedom, all other freedoms develop and thrive, inasmuch as freedom is an indivisible good, the prerogative of the human person and his dignity.

Address to the Diplomatic Corps
Accredited to the Holy See
10 January 2005

In our society, characterized by the global phenomenon of migration, individuals must seek the proper balance between respect for their own identity and recognition of that of others....

We should encourage a mutual fertilization of cultures. This presumes knowledge and openness between cultures in an atmosphere of true understanding and goodwill.... It will be necessary to combine the principle of respect for cultural differences with the protection of values that are common and inalienable because they are founded on universal human rights. This gives rise to that climate of civic reasonableness which permits friendly and peaceful coexistence.

World Day of Migrants
and Refugees, 2005

The image from the Prophet Isaiah, to which I have several times referred at the meetings with the youth of the whole world (cf. Is 21:11–12), could also be used here to invite all believers to be “morning watchmen.” As such, Christians must above all listen to the cry for help that comes from so many migrants and refugees, but they must then foster, with active commitment, prospects of hope that will herald the dawn of a more open and supportive society. It is up to them in the first place to discern God’s presence in history, even when everything still seems to be enveloped in darkness.

World Day of Migrants
and Refugees, 2005

I ndeed, much of the violence that humanity suffers in our times is rooted in misunderstanding as well as in rejection of the values and identity of foreign cultures. Many times such situations could be overcome through a better knowledge of each other.

25th World Day of Tourism
27 September 2004

Contact with others leads to discovering their secret, to being open to them in order to recognize their good qualities and thus contribute to a better knowledge of each one. This is a lengthy process that aims to shape societies and cultures, making them more and more a reflection of the multi-faceted gifts of God to human beings.

World Day of Migrants
and Refugees, 2005

Human life is a precious gift to be loved and defended in each of its stages. The Commandment, “You shall not kill,” always requires respecting and promoting human life, from its beginning to its natural end. It is a command that applies even in the presence of illness and when physical weakness reduces a person’s ability to be self-reliant. If growing old, with its inevitable conditions, is accepted serenely in the light of faith, it can become an invaluable opportunity for better understanding the mystery of the Cross, which gives full meaning to human existence.

Message for Lent, 2005

The greater amount of free time in the last stage of life offers the elderly an opportunity to face primary issues that perhaps had been previously ignored due to concerns that were pressing or considered a priority. Knowledge of the nearness of the final goal leads the elderly person to focus on what is essential, giving importance to those things that the passing of years does not destroy.

Precisely because of this condition, the elderly person can carry out his or her role in society. If it is true that we live upon the heritage of those who have gone before us, and that our future depends definitively on how the cultural values of our own people are transmitted to us, then the wisdom and experience of the elderly can illuminate our path on the way of progress toward an ever more complete form of civilization.

Message for Lent, 2005