



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY TO RIO DE JANEIRO
ON THE OCCASION OF THE XXVIII WORLD YOUTH DAY

FAREWELL CEREMONY

ADDRESS OF POPE FRANCIS

Galeão/Antonio Carlos Jobim International Airport, Rio de Janeiro
Sunday, 28 July 2013

Mr. Vice-President,
Distinguished National, State and Local Authorities,
Dear Archbishop of São Sebastião do Rio de Janeiro,
Dear Cardinals and Brother Bishops,
Dear Friends,

I am about to leave your country to return to Rome. I depart with many happy memories which I know will nourish my prayers. Already I am beginning to miss Brazil, this great people showing so much affection and friendship. I shall miss the natural and warm smiles I have seen in so many faces, and the enthusiasm shown by the volunteers. I shall miss the hope filling the eyes of the young people in the Hospital of Saint Francis. I shall miss the faith and joy shown by the residents of Varginha in the midst of their hardship. I know that Christ is truly present in the lives of countless young people and in the lives of many whom I have met during this unforgettable week. Thank you for the warm welcome and the friendship that have been offered to me. This too I shall miss.

In particular, I would like to thank Madam President, represented here by the Vice-President, for having expressed the sentiments of the entire population of Brazil towards the Successor of Peter. I warmly extend gratitude to my brother Bishops and to their many collaborators for making this week a splendid celebration of the richness and joy of our faith in Jesus Christ. I wish to thank, in a

particular way, Archbishop Orani Tempesta of Rio de Janeiro, his Auxiliary Bishops, and Cardinal Raymundo Damasceno, President of the Bishops' Conference. I thank all those who took part in the eucharistic celebrations and other events, and I thank those who organized them and those who worked to broadcast them through the media. Finally, I wish to thank all those who in one way or another rose to the challenge of hosting and organizing the large numbers of young people. And not least my gratitude goes to the many people who prayed, often in silence and simplicity, for this World Youth Day to be an authentic experience of growth in faith. May God reward all of you, as only he can!

As I express my thanks and bid farewell, my thoughts turn to those who are at the heart of these celebrations: the young people! May God bless you for the beautiful witness of your lives and for your intense and joyful participation over these last few days. Many of you came here as disciples; I have no doubt that all of you will leave as missionaries. Through your joyful witness and service, help to build a civilization of love. Show, by your life, that it is worth giving your time and talents in order to attain high ideals, it is worth recognizing the dignity of each human person, and it is worth taking risks for Christ and his Gospel. It is he that we have come to seek because he first sought us. It is he who has inflamed our hearts with the desire to take the Good News to the large cities and to the small communities, to the countryside and to all the corners of this vast planet. I will always place my hopes in the young people of Brazil and in the young around the world: through them, Christ is preparing a new springtime all over the earth. I have seen its first fruits and I know that others will joyfully reap the full harvest.

Finally, my thoughts turn to Our Lady of Aparecida, to whom I also bid farewell. In that beloved Shrine I knelt to pray for the entire human family and in particular for all Brazilians. I implored Mary to strengthen you in the Christian faith, which forms part of the noble soul of Brazil, as indeed of many other countries; this faith is your culture's treasure and serves as encouragement and support in the task of building a renewed humanity in harmony and solidarity.

As he departs, the Pope says to all of you affectionately: "see you soon". He asks you not to forget to pray for him. The Pope needs the prayers of all of you. I offer you an affectionate embrace. May God bless you!