

# Talen til de præstestuderende

I forbindelse med Verdensungdomsdagen i Köln talte pave Benedikt XVI ved et møde i St. Pantaleon Kirken den 19. august 2005 for præstestuderende fra en række katolske præsteseminarier

**Af Benedikt XVI**<sup>1</sup>

Kære Seminarister!

Jeg hilser jer alle hjerteligt velkommen og siger jer tak for jeres meget venlige modtagelse af mig og frem for alt for, at I er kommet til dette møde fra talrige lande fra alle fem verdensdele. På en særlig måde retter jeg en hjertelig tak til de seminarister, præster og biskopper, som har givet os deres personlige vidnesbyrd.<sup>2</sup> Jeg glæder mig over dette møde med jer. Jeg ville, at der i programmet for disse dage i Köln skulle være plads til et specielt møde med unge seminarister, således at kaldets dimension, der jo altid spiller en rolle i forbindelse med Verdensungdomsdagene, skulle fremtræde stærkere og komme tydeligere til udtryk. Denne erfaring gør uden tvivl ganske specielt indtryk på jer, fordi I er seminarister, det vil sige unge mænd, som på et vist tidspunkt intensivt søger efter Kristus og et møde med ham med henblik på en vigtig opgave i Kirken. Det er det, seminariet består i: det er ikke så meget et bestemt opholdssted, men meget mere et betydningsfuldt afsnit i en Kristi discipels liv.

Jeg forsøger at forestille mig, hvilken genklang den 20. Verdensungdomsdags tema – "Vi er kommet for at tilbede Ham" – og endvidere hele den bibelske fortælling om De helliger Tre Konger, som disse ord er taget fra, vil kunne udløse i Jer. Dette afsnit i Evangeliet har en enestående betydning for jer, netop fordi I står i begreb med at gå prøvelsens vej til præstekaldet.

Hvorfor fulgte de vise fra fjerne lande stjernen til Betlehem? Svaret er forbundet med "stjernens" hemmelighed, den stjerne, som de så "gå op", og som de identificerede som "Jødernes Konges"

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<sup>1</sup> Oversat af Nanit Price

<sup>2</sup> Nemlig i indlæg forud for pavens tale. Red.

stjerne, nemlig som et tegn på Messias' fødsel.<sup>3</sup> Deres rejse kom derfor i stand i kraft af et håb om at komme til Jødernes Konge, til Guds eget kongedømme, som nu i stjernen fandt sin bekræftelse og vejviser. De vise brød op, fordi de inde i sig selv følte en dyb længsel, som drev dem til at forlade alt og begive sig på vej. Det følte, som om de altid havde ventet på denne stjerne, som om denne rejse allerede fra evige tider havde været forudset i deres skæbne og nu kunne blive til virkelighed. Kære venner, dette er kaldets hemmelighed, en hemmelighed som angår enhver kristens liv, men som kommer tydeligere til udtryk hos dem, som Kristus indbyder til at forlade alt for at følge efter Ham i en tættere forbindelse. Seminaristen oplever kaldets skønhed i dét, vi kunne kalde "forelskelsens" tid. Hans indre fyldes af en undren, der lader ham bede: "Herre, hvorfor netop mig?" Men kærligheden kender ikke til noget "hvorfor", den er en uforskyldt gave, som man svarer på ved at give sig selv.

Seminarieret er en tid, der tjener til (ud)dannelse og til at lære at kunne skelne. Uddannelsen har, som I ved, forskellige dimensioner, som mødes i den enkelte person; den omfatter det menneskelige, det åndeligt-gejstlige og det kulturelle område. Dens højeste mål er det at lære den Gud at kende indefra, som har vist os sit ansigt i Jesus Kristus. Det er derfor nødvendigt med et grundigt studium af Den hellige Skrift, af troen og af Kirkens liv, idet Skriften forbliver det levende ord i Kirken.

Alt dette må stå i sammenhæng med de spørgsmål, vor fornuft stiller, og således være i overensstemmelse med vort nuværende livs kontekst. Somme tider vil dette studium synes besværligt, men det er en uerstattelig del af vort møde med Kristus og vort kald til at forkynde ham. Alt skal tjene til at udfolde en sammenhængende og ligevægtig personlighed, som er i stand til gyldigt at overtage en præsts opgave og udøve den ansvarligt.

Af afgørende betydning er de mennesker, der underviser og uddanner: Kvaliteten af en delkirkes præsteskab afhænger for en stor del af kvaliteten af dets seminarium og dermed af kvaliteten hos de personer, der er ansvarlige for uddannelsen. Kære seminarister, netop af denne grund beder vi i dag med taknemlighed for jeres overordnede, jeres professorer og undervisere, hvis åndelige nærvær vi føler her ved vort møde. Lad os bede Herren om, at de må kunne opfylde den vigtige opgave, de har fået betroet, på bedste måde. Seminarieret er en tid, hvor man er på vej, en tid til at søge og opdage Kristus. I virkeligheden kan det unge menneske kun i det omfang, han personligt erfarer Kristus, erkende Hans vilje og dermed også sit eget kald. Jo bedre du kender Jesus, des mere vil hans hemmelighed tiltrække dig; jo mere intensivt dit møde med ham er, des mere vil du føle dig draget til at søge ham. Det er en Åndens bevægelse, som varer ved hele livet igennem, og som i seminarieret erfares som en tid fuld af løfter, så at sige et "Forår".

Da de vise var kommet til Betlehem gik de "ind i huset og så barnet og Maria, dets moder, og de faldt ned og tilbad det".<sup>4</sup> Her er endeligt det så længselsfuldt ventede øjeblik: mødet med Jesus. "De gik ind i huset": dette hus er på en vis måde Kirken. For at møde Frelseren må man gå ind i huset, som er Kirken. I tiden i Seminarieret gennemgår den unge seminarists bevidsthed en meget betydningsfuld modningsproces: Han ser ikke mere Kirken "udefra", men opfatter den så at sige "indefra", som sit "hus", fordi det er Kristi hus, hvor "Maria, hans moder" bor. Og det er netop moderen, der viser ham sin søn, Jesus, som forestiller ham for ham og gør det muligt for ham så at sige at se ham, at røre ved ham og tage ham i sine arme. Maria lærer ham at betragte Jesus med hjertets øjne og at leve af ham. Hvert øjeblik af livet i seminarieret kan man fornemme Herrens moders kærlige nærværelse, som fører enhver hen til et møde med Kristus, i meditationens stilhed, i bønne og i broderligt samliv. Maria hjælper til at møde Herren, frem for alt i Eukaristien, når han i ordet og i det forvandlede brød bliver til vor åndelige næring.

<sup>3</sup> Jf. Matt 2,2: "Hvor er jødernes nyfødte konge? For vi har set hans stjerne gå op og er kommet for at tilbede ham."

<sup>4</sup> Jf. Matt 2,11-12

"De faldt ned og tilbad Ham ... så tog de deres gaver frem: guld, røgelse og myrra".<sup>5</sup> Her ser vi hele vejens højdepunkt: mødet bliver til tilbedelse, munder ud i en troens og kærlighedens akt, som i Jesus, der blev født af Maria, erkender den menneskevordne Guds Søn. Er det ikke sådan, at Simon Peters og de andre apostles tro, Paulus' og alle andre helliges tro og specielt også troen hos hellige seminarister og præster allerede som billede er til stede i de vise mænds handling, den samme tro, som har kendetegnet Kirkens 2.000-årige historie?

Hellighedens hemmelighed er venskabet med Kristus, den trofaste forening med hans vilje. "Kristus er alt for os," sagde Den hellige Ambrosius og Den hellige Benedikt fastholdt, at intet måtte foretrækkes for Kristi kærlighed. Måtte Kristus være alt for jer. Frem for alt, kære seminarister, giv Ham det kostbareste, I har, sådan som Johannes Paul II foreslog i sit budskab til Verdensungdomsdagen: jeres friheds guld, jeres bønners røgelse og jeres dybeste kærligheds myrra.<sup>6</sup>

Seminariet er en tid, hvor I forbereder jer på jeres sendelse. De vise mænd fra Østen "vendte hjem" til deres land, og med sikkerhed har de aflagt vidnesbyrd om deres møde med jødernes konge. Også I vil, efter at seminariets lange og nødvendige uddannelsesvej er afsluttet, hver for sig blive udsendt til at være Kristi indviede tjener; enhver af jer vil vende tilbage til menneskene som en "alter Kristus" - en anden Kristus.

På deres vej hjem har de vise sikker måttet kæmpe med farer, møje, forvirring og tvivl - stjernen, som havde ført dem, var der ikke mere! Det var dem selv, der nu bar lyset i sig. Det var deres opgave at vogte det, bevare det og nære det i bestandig erindring om Kristus, hans hellige ansigt, hans ubeskrivelige kærlighed. Kære seminarister! Hvis Gud vil, vil også I en dag, viet af Helligånden, begynde jeres sendelse. Husk altid på Jesu ord: "Bliv i min kærlighed".<sup>7</sup> Det er det, der er jeres kalds og jeres sendelses hemmelighed! Den bevares i Marias uplettede hjerte; hun våger med moderlig kærlighed over enhver af jer. Henvend jer til hende, ofte og tillidsfuldt.

Jeg forsikrer jer om min kærlighed og min daglige forbøn og giver jer af hjertet min velsignelse.

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<sup>5</sup> Matt 2,11-12

<sup>6</sup> Jf. pave Johannes Paul II's budskab til Verdensungdomsdagen, 4. **Klik her** for at se dette budskab (engelsk)

<sup>7</sup> Joh 15,9



**MESSAGE OF THE HOLY FATHER  
JOHN PAUL II  
TO THE YOUTH OF THE WORLD  
ON THE OCCASION  
OF THE 20<sup>th</sup> WORLD YOUTH DAY  
(COLOGNE, AUGUST 2005)**

***"We have come to worship him" (Mt 2:2)***

*My dear young people!*

1. This year we have celebrated the 19<sup>th</sup> World Youth Day, meditating on the desire expressed by some Greeks who had gone to Jerusalem for the Passover: *"We wish to see Jesus"* (Jn 12:21). And here we are now, making our way to Cologne where, in August 2005, the 20<sup>th</sup> World Youth Day is to be celebrated.

*"We have come to worship him" (Mt 2:2)*: this is the theme of the next World Youth Day. It is a theme that enables young people from every continent to follow in spirit the path taken by the Magi whose relics, according to a pious tradition, are venerated in this very city, and to meet, as they did, the Messiah of all nations.

It is true to say that the light of Christ had already opened the minds and the hearts of the Magi. "They went their way" (Mt 2:9), says the Evangelist, setting out boldly along unknown paths on a long, and by no means easy, journey. They did not hesitate to leave everything behind in order to follow the star that they had seen in the East (cf Mt 2:2). Imitating the Magi, you young people are also making preparations to set out on a "journey" from every region of the world to go to Cologne. It is important for you not only to concern yourselves with the practical arrangements for World Youth Day, but first of all you must carefully prepare yourselves spiritually, in an atmosphere of faith and listening to the Word of God.

2. *"And the star... went before them, till it came to rest over the place where the child was"* (Mt 2:9). The Magi reached Bethlehem because they had obediently allowed themselves to be guided by the star. Indeed, *"When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy"* (Mt 2:10). It is important, my dear friends, to learn to *observe the signs* with which God is calling us and guiding us. When we are conscious of being led by Him, our heart experiences *authentic and deep joy* as well as a powerful desire to meet Him and a persevering strength to follow Him obediently.

*"And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother"* (Mt 2:11). There is nothing extraordinary about this at first sight. Yet that Child was different from any other: He is the only Son of

God, yet He *emptied Himself of His glory* (cf *Phil 2:7*) and came to earth to die on the Cross. He came down among us and became poor in order to reveal to us His divine glory, which we shall contemplate fully in heaven, our blessed home.

Who could have invented a greater sign of love? We are left in awe before *the mystery of a God who lowered himself* to take on our human condition, to the point of giving His life for us on the Cross (cf *Phil 2:6-8*). In His *poverty*, - as Saint Paul reminds us - "*though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich*" (*2 Cor 8:9*), and came to offer salvation to sinners. How can we give thanks to God for such magnanimous goodness?

3. The Magi found Jesus at "*Bêth-lehem*" which means "*house of bread*". In the humble stable in Bethlehem on some straw lay the "*grain of wheat*" who, by dying, would bring forth "*much fruit*" (cf *Jn 12:24*). When speaking of Himself and His saving mission in the course of His public life, Jesus would later use the image of bread. He would say "*I am the bread of life*", "*I am the bread which came down from heaven*", "*the bread that I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh*". (*Jn 6: 35.41.51*).

Faithfully pursuing the path of our Redeemer from the poverty of the *Crib* to His abandonment on the *Cross* we can better understand the mystery of His love which redeems humanity. The Child, laid by Mary in the manger, is the Man-God we shall see nailed to the Cross. The same Redeemer is present in the sacrament of the Eucharist. In the *stable at Bethlehem* He allowed himself to be worshipped under the humble outward appearances of a newborn baby, by Mary, by Joseph and by the shepherds; in the *consecrated Host* we adore Him sacramentally present in his body, blood, soul and godhead, and He offers himself to us as the food of eternal life. The *Mass* then becomes a truly loving encounter with the One who gave himself wholly for us. Do not hesitate, my dear young friends, to respond to Him when He invites you "*to the wedding feast of the Lamb*" (cf *Rev 19:9*). Listen to him, prepare yourselves properly and draw close to the Sacrament of the Altar, particularly in this Year of the Eucharist (October 2004-2005) which I have proclaimed for the whole Church.

4. "*They fell down and worshipped Him*" (*Mt 2:11*). While the Magi acknowledged and worshipped the baby that Mary cradled in her arms as the One awaited by the nations and foretold by prophets, today we can also worship Him in the Eucharist, and *acknowledge Him as our Creator, our only Lord and Saviour*.

"*Opening their treasures they offered Him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh*" (*Mt 2:11*). The gifts that the Magi offered the Messiah symbolised true worship. With gold, they emphasised His Royal Godhead; with incense, they acknowledged Him as the priest of the New Covenant; by offering Him myrrh, they celebrated the prophet who would shed His own blood to reconcile humanity with the Father.

My dear young people, you too offer to the Lord the gold of your lives, namely, *your freedom* to follow Him out of love, responding faithfully to His call; let the incense of your fervent *prayer* rise up to him, in praise of His glory; offer Him your myrrh, *that is your affection of total gratitude to Him*, true Man, who loved us to the point of dying as a criminal on Golgotha.

5. Be worshippers of the only true God, giving Him pride of place in your lives! *Idolatry* is an ever-present temptation. Sadly, there are those who seek the solution to their problems *in religious practices that are incompatible with the Christian faith*. There is a strong urge to believe in the facile myths of success and power; it is dangerous to accept the fleeting ideas of the sacred which present God in the form of cosmic energy, or in any other manner that is inconsistent with Catholic teaching.

My dear young people, do not yield to *false illusions* and *passing fads* which so frequently leave behind a tragic spiritual vacuum! Reject the *seduction* of wealth, consumerism and the subtle violence sometimes used by the mass media.

Worshipping the true God is an authentic act of *resistance to all forms of idolatry*. Worship Christ: He is the Rock on which to build your future and a world of greater justice and solidarity. Jesus is *the Prince of peace*: the source of forgiveness and reconciliation, who can make brothers and sisters of all the members of the human family.

6. "*And they departed to their own country by another way*" (Mt 2:12). The Gospel tells us that after their meeting with Christ, the Magi returned home "by another way". This change of route can symbolise the *conversion* to which all those who encounter Jesus are called, in order to become the true worshippers that He desires (cf Jn 4: 23-24). This entails imitating the way He acted by becoming, as the apostle Paul writes, "*a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God*". The apostle then adds that we must not be conformed to the mentality of this world, but be transformed by the renewal of our minds, to "*prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect*" (cf Rm 12: 1-2).

Listening to Christ and worshipping Him leads us to make *courageous choices*, to take what are sometimes heroic decisions. Jesus is demanding, because He wishes our genuine happiness. He calls some to give up everything to follow Him in the priestly or consecrated life. Those who hear this invitation must not be afraid to say "yes" and to generously set about following Him as His disciples. But in addition to vocations to special forms of consecration there is also the specific vocation of all baptised Christians: that is also a vocation to that "high standard" of ordinary Christian living which is expressed in holiness (cf *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 31). When we meet Christ and accept His Gospel, life changes and we are driven to communicate our experience to others.

There are so many of our contemporaries who do not yet know the love of God or who are seeking to fill their hearts with trifling substitutes. It is therefore urgently necessary for us to be *witnesses to love contemplated in Christ*. The invitation to take part in World Youth Day is also extended to you, dear friends, who are not baptised or who do not identify with the Church. Are you not perhaps yearning for the Absolute and in search of "something" to give a meaning to your lives? Turn to Christ and you will not be let down.

7. Dear young people, the Church needs genuine witnesses for the new evangelisation: men and women whose lives have been transformed by meeting with Jesus, men and women who are capable of communicating this experience to others. The Church needs saints. All are called to holiness, and holy people alone can renew humanity. Many have gone before us along this path of Gospel heroism, and I urge you to turn often to them to pray for their intercession. By meeting in Cologne you will learn to become better acquainted with some of them, such as *St Boniface*, the apostle of Germany, the *Saints of Cologne*, and in particular Ursula, Albert the Great, Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein) and Blessed Adolph Kolping. Of these I would like to specifically mention *St Albert and Teresa Benedicta of the Cross* who, with the same interior attitude as the Magi, were passionate seekers after the truth. They had no hesitation in placing their intellectual abilities at the service of the faith, thereby demonstrating that faith and reason are linked and seek each other.

My dear young people as you move forward in spirit towards Cologne, the pope will accompany you with his prayers. May Mary, "Eucharistic woman" and Mother of Wisdom, support you along the way, enlighten your decisions, and teach you to love what is true, good and beautiful. May she lead you all to her Son, who

alone can satisfy the innermost yearnings of the human mind and heart.

Go with my blessing!

*Castel Gandolfo, 6 August 2004*

**JOHN PAUL II**

