



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF THE DIOCESE OF CÒRDOBA (ARGENTINA)**

Clementine Hall

Sunday, 16 July 2023

[Multimedia]

¡Buen día!

Like so many thousands of young people who are going to Portugal in these days, you are bringing to life the motto that calls us together: like Mary, you have arisen, you have left behind what you know — your families and your comforts — and set out in haste to meet others (cf. *Lk* 1:39). Some are bringing the *mate* [tea], others a guitar, but what identifies you all is “the jersey”: the jersey of faith and of love for God and for your brothers and sisters.

I would like to ask you: Did you realize that you are preparing to “play in a world cup”? And this “world cup” is very special. It is a friendly encounter in which there are no winners or losers, but one in which we all win. Because when we open ourselves and meet others, when we share, when we give what we have and are open to receive what others offer us, when we reject no one, then are we all victorious and can lift up “the cup of fraternity” together.

These days in Rome, before World Youth Day begins, you can see the traces of many Christians who followed Christ until the end, of many saints who gave their lives for him at different moments in history. And that teaches us that, with Christ’s team, the game is played until the final minute, and we cannot get distracted and score an own goal. We must be attentive and play as a team, following the instructions of the coach, that is, of the people who accompany us and guide us to become better friends of Jesus every day.

I encourage you to live this “world championship” intensely. This World Youth Day will enrich you

with its great diversity of faces, cultures, experiences, of different expressions and manifestations of our faith. But, above all, you will be able to deeply experience Jesus' desire: that we may be "one" so that the world may believe (cf. *Jn 17:21*), and this will help you to bear witness to the joy of the Gospel for many other young people who cannot find the meaning of life or who have already abandoned the path forward.

I hope you will play a good game. May Jesus bless you and the Blessed Virgin take care of you. I ask you to pray for me. See you in Lisbon! I give you my blessing.

L'Osservatore Romano, Weekly Edition in English, Fifty-sixth year, number 29, Friday, 21 July 2023, p. 2.