POPE JOHN PAUL II

IN MY OWN WORDS

MEMORIAL EDITION

1920-2005

Compiled and edited by
Anthony F. Chiffolo

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Friends: I greet you and all those dear to you, I bless you and I encourage you not to grow faint as you travel the right road.
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The true success of our lives consists in knowing and doing the will of Jesus, in doing whatever Jesus tells us.

Meeting with Youth, New Orleans, 1987
Everyone has a vocation: parents, teachers, students, workers, professional people, people who are retired. Everyone has something to do for God.

_Homily at Giants Stadium, 1995_

The search and discovery of God’s will for you is a deep and fascinating endeavor. It requires of you the attitude of trust expressed in the words of the Psalm…“you will show me the path to life, fullness of joy in your presence, the delights at your right hand forever” (16:11). Every vocation, every path to which Christ calls us, ultimately leads to fulfillment and happiness, because it leads to God, to sharing in God’s own life.

_Message to Youth_

True holiness does not mean a flight from the world; rather, it lies in the effort to incarnate the Gospel in everyday life, in the family, at school and at work, and in social and political involvement.

_To Catholic Charismatics, 1996_
God can use our weakness as easily as our strength in order to accomplish his will.

Meeting with Priests, Miami, 1987

Do not be afraid! Life with Christ is a wonderful adventure. He alone can give full meaning to life, he alone is the center of history. Live by him!

Mass with Youth, Hradec Králové, Czech Republic, 1997

The whole of the Christian life is like a great pilgrimage to the house of the Father, whose unconditional love for every human creature, and in particular for the “prodigal son,” we discover anew each day. This pilgrimage takes place in the heart of each person, extends to the believing community and then reaches to the whole of humanity.

Tertio Millennio Adveniente
Conversion to God always consists in discovering his mercy, that is, in discovering that love which is patient and kind as only the Creator and Father can be. Conversion to God is always the fruit of the “rediscovery” of this Father, who is rich in mercy.

Authentic knowledge of the God of mercy, the God of tender love, is a constant and inexhaustible source of conversion, not only as a momentary interior act but also as a permanent attitude, as a state of mind. Those who come to know God in this way, who “see” him in this way, can live only in a state of being continually converted to him.

Dives in Misericordia

The Gospel is certainly demanding. We know that Christ never permitted His disciples and those who listened to Him to entertain any illusions about this. On the contrary, He spared no effort in preparing them for every type of internal or external difficulty, always aware of the fact that they might well decide to abandon Him. Therefore, if He says, “Be not afraid!” He certainly does not say it in order to nullify in some way that which He has required. Rather,
by these words He confirms the entire truth of the Gospel and all the demands it contains. At the same time, however, He reveals that His demands never exceed man’s abilities. If man accepts these demands with an attitude of faith, he will also find in the grace that God never fails to give him the necessary strength to meet those demands.

_CROSSING THE THRESHOLD OF HOPE_

The way Jesus shows you is not easy. Rather, it is like a path winding up a mountain. Do not lose heart! The steeper the road, the faster it rises toward ever wider horizons.

_MESSAGE FOR WORLD YOUTH DAY, 1996_

It is true: Jesus is a demanding friend. He points to lofty goals: he asks us to go out of ourselves in order to meet him, entrusting to him our whole life: “Whoever loses his life for my sake and that of the gospel will save it” (Mk 8:35). The proposal may seem difficult, and, in some cases, frightening. But—I ask you—is it better to be resigned to a life without ideals, to a world made in our image and
likeness, or rather, generously to seek truth, goodness, justice, working for a world that reflects the beauty of God, even at the cost of facing the trials it may involve?

**Message for World Youth Day, 1996**

In order to hold fast to the fundamental values which keep them sinless, Christians sometimes have to suffer marginalization and persecution—at times heroically—because of moral choices which are contrary to the world’s behavior….This is the cost of Christian witness, of a worthy life in the eyes of God. If you are not willing to pay this price, your lives will be empty.…

**Homily at Camagüey, Cuba, 1998**

Christians, like all people of good will, are called upon under grave obligation of conscience not to cooperate formally in practices which, even if permitted by civil legislation, are contrary to God’s law.

**Evangelium Vitae**