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Christ Is One Certainty in Life, Says Pontiff

Reflects on the "Fixed Destiny" of Life's Journey

VATICAN CITY, APRIL 6, 2009 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- Although life is uncertain, there is nothing uncertain about the destiny of every person, Benedict XVI told a delegation of youth from Madrid, which is the host city for the 2011 World Youth Day.

The Pope spoke today of Christ as the "end of human life and history" upon receiving in audience the youth from the Archdiocese of Madrid, accompanied by their archbishop, Cardinal Antonio María Rouco Varela.

"Go in the footsteps of Christ," the Pontiff told the youth. "He is your end, your way and also your prize.

"Life is a journey, certainly. But it is not an uncertain journey without a fixed destiny; it leads to Christ, the end of human life and history. On this journey you will meet with him who gave his life for love, and opens to you the doors of eternal life."

The Holy Father encouraged the youth to discover in the cross "the infinite measure of Christ's love": "Christ gave himself for each one of you and loves you in a unique and personal way. Respond to Christ's love by offering him your life with love."

He also urged the youth to "be formed in the faith that gives meaning to your life and strengthens your convictions," and to announce Christ to their friends, "so that they too will know him and confess him as Lord of their lives."

"Young people of today need to discover the new life that comes from God," he said, "to be satiated by the truth that has its source in Christ who died and was resurrected and who the Church has received as a treasure for all men."

Benedict XVI also underlined the importance of the World Youth Day events as they "manifest the dynamism of the Church and her eternal youth," and they "enable young people to feel they are members of the Church, in full communion with their pastors and with the Successor of Peter."

"Pray in common, opening the doors of your parishes, associations and movements so that all can feel at home in the Church, in which they are loved with the very love of God," the Pope urged. "Celebrate and live your faith with immense joy, which is a gift of the Spirit.

"In this way your hearts and your friends will prepare to celebrate the great feast that youth day is and we will all experience a new epiphany of the youth of the Church."

Holy Week

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Reflecting on Holy Week, which began Sunday, the Pope said the mysteries of Christ's passion, death and resurrection are filled with "what surpasses all wisdom and knowledge, namely, the love of God manifested in Christ."

"Learn from him," he said, "who did not come 'to be served but to serve, and to give his life as ransom for many.'"

The Holy Father continued: "This is the style of Christ's love, marked with the sign of the glorious cross, in which Christ is exalted, in the sight of all, with his open heart, so that the world can look and see, through his perfect humanity, the love that saves us.

"Thus the cross becomes the very sign of life, as on it Christ overcomes sin and death through the total giving of himself.

"That is why we must embrace and adore the cross of the Lord, make it our own, accept its weight as the Cyrenean to participate in the only thing that can redeem the whole of humanity."

"In baptism you were marked with the cross of Christ and you belong to him totally," the Pontiff concluded. "Make yourselves ever more worthy of it and never be ashamed of this supreme sign of love."

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