

# Pope Leo XIV: “Aspire to great things, to holiness, do not settle for less”

Around a million young pilgrims gathered in Tor Vergata, on the outskirts of Rome, for the Jubilee of Youth on Saturday evening.

During the Mass for the Jubilee of Young People at Tor Vergata, Pope Leo XIV reminds the young people that Jesus is our hope, and urges them to “adventure with the Lord toward eternity” as the Lord is “gently knocking” at the window of their soul.

Jesus is our hope, adventure with Him throughout your life, and let Him enlighten you...

Pope Leo XIV expressed this during the Mass for the Jubilee of Young People at Tor Vergata in Rome on Sunday morning.

The Holy Father introduced this by acknowledging **in his homily** that even if today’s liturgy does not mention the episode directly, it invites us to reflect on the encounter with the Risen One “Who transforms our lives and enlightens our affections, desires and thoughts.”

## **The Lord is knocking at window of our soul**

He noted that the first reading, taken from the Book of Ecclesiastes, invites us, like the two disciples, to come to terms with the experience of our limitations and the fleeting nature of all things that pass away.

“We are not made for a life where everything is taken for granted and static, but for an existence that is constantly renewed through gift of self in love.” “This is why,” he said, “we continually aspire to something ‘more’ that no created reality can give us; we feel a deep and burning thirst that no drink in this world can satisfy.”

“Knowing this,” he said, “let us not deceive our hearts by trying to satisfy them with cheap imitations!” Rather, he suggested, “Let us listen to them!”

“Let us turn this thirst,” the Holy Father suggested, “into a step stool, like children who stand on tiptoe, in order to peer through the window of encounter with God. We will then find ourselves before Him, who is waiting for us, knocking gently on the window of our soul.”

### **St. Augustine's wisdom**

“It is truly beautiful, especially at a young age,” the Holy Father said, “to open wide your hearts, to allow him to enter, and to set out on this adventure with him towards eternity.”

Saint Augustine, reflecting on his intense search for God, the Pope recalled, asked himself: ‘What, then, is the object of our hope [...]?’

Asking whether our source of hope is the earth or something beautiful that comes from it, he argued that these items were not, but rather ‘the One Who made them,’ ‘He is your hope.’

St. Augustine, Pope Leo reminded the young people, thinking of his own journey, prayed and said, “You [Lord] were within me, but I was outside, and it was there that I searched for you [...] You called, you shouted, and you broke through my deafness.”

Like Augustine's search for meaning, the Pope acknowledged the young people at times ponder similar questions.

### **Things that are above**

The Pope acknowledged, “There is a burning question in our hearts, a need for truth that we cannot ignore, which leads us to ask ourselves: what is true happiness? What is the true meaning of life? What can free us from being trapped in meaninglessness, boredom and mediocrity?”

In recent days, Pope Leo recalled the young people have had many beautiful experiences, adding that through all this, “you can grasp an important point,” namely the fullness of our existence does not depend on what we store up or, as we heard in the Gospel, on what we possess.

Rather, he reminded, fullness has to do with what we joyfully welcome and share. “Buying, hoarding and consuming are not enough. We need to lift our eyes, to look upwards, to the ‘things that are above...’”

## Jesus is our hope

“Dear young people, Jesus is our hope,” Pope Leo insisted.

“It is He,” as Saint John Paul II said addressing young people in the same place during the 2000 Jubilee, Pope Leo remembered, “who stirs in you the desire to do something great with your lives [...] to commit... to improving yourselves and society, making the world more human and more fraternal.”

Therefore, the Holy Father exhorted, “Let us remain united to Him, let us remain in His friendship, always, cultivating it through prayer, adoration, Eucharistic Communion, frequent Confession, and generous charity, following the examples of Blessed Piergiorgio Frassati and Blessed Carlo Acutis who will soon be declared saints.”

Hence, he invited, “Aspire to great things, to holiness, wherever you are. Do not settle for less. You will then see the light of the Gospel growing every day, in you and around you.”

Finally, after entrusting the young people to the Blessed Mother, Pope Leo XIV concluded, praying that as they return home, they “continue to walk joyfully in the footsteps of the Savior, and spread your enthusiasm and the witness of your faith to everyone you meet!”

*\* Article published in Vatican News. Deborah Castellano Lubov. Photos: Vatican Media.*