



ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER LEO XIV TO THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE JESUS YOUTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

*Paul VI Audience Hall
Saturday, 24 October 2026*

[\[Multimedia\]](#)

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Peace be with you!

My dear brothers and sisters, good morning and welcome to all of you!

I joyfully greet all of you, delegates from the groups of Jesus Youth present in many parts of the world, and I likewise greet the bishops, the priests and consecrated men and women who accompany you. This is a special encounter, because it is the first time that the Jesus Youth movement, with all of its leaders and delegates, is meeting with the Successor of Peter.

You have gathered in these days to reflect and discern how best to continue on your journey, forty years after your movement's inception. I know that you have undertaken a lengthy consultation in a synodal style over the past three years. Now you would like the fruits of this reflection to be transformed into a new impetus, a more generous embrace of the gifts that the Holy Spirit has bestowed upon you.

Your movement was founded in the state of Kerala in India as part of the Charismatic Renewal, through the spontaneous initiative of young people themselves, who were inspired by a personal encounter with the Lord Jesus. Indeed, the starting point for

every authentic renewal in the Church is one's own discovery of Jesus' love. Members of various prayer groups thus felt the need to come together in order to channel their enthusiasm and their initiatives into something that could sustain and guide the new spiritual and missionary impulse that they had experienced.

For ten years now, my dear friends, you have been recognized by the Holy See as an international association of the faithful. A time of ecclesial maturity therefore has begun for you, a time in which you are called to take on new challenges and to bear new fruit. Do not lose your apostolic zeal, but rather foster it and carry it to new countries. Once again, all of this is possible only by keeping your gaze on Jesus Christ. Many young people in your movement have done precisely this, and in this way have become joyful and courageous witnesses to the faith. Some have done so in a particularly beautiful and moving manner, such as Ajna George, who was sustained through the great trial of her illness by her love for Jesus present in the Eucharist.

Although many of you live in areas where Christians are a minority, do not be afraid to give witness to your friendship with Jesus. The hearts of young people are longing to discover Christ's love. In a particular way, I encourage you to work with families to support the vocation to married life. Young people need to know that their lives are great and beautiful because they are part of God's greater plan. In addition to the priesthood and consecrated life, it is good to promote marriage as a call from God, a vocation to holiness to be welcomed with joy, in the certainty that God sustains with his grace all those whom he calls. This is precisely what you have experienced in Jesus Youth over these years: young Christians get married, they become parents and discover their vocation to be missionary families, working together with ordained ministers to spread the Gospel.

Dear brothers and sisters, I urge you to continue on your journey by faithfully living the life of prayer and service to the poor that characterizes Jesus Youth. Seek to preserve your unity, especially amid the great diversity of social backgrounds, cultures and languages that are hallmarks of your movement. In this regard, I also ask priests and bishops to adopt a fatherly and far-sighted perspective, overcoming any difficulties that might arise from ritual differences, so as to seek above all the highest spiritual good of young people. I hope that the Jesus Youth movement will always be marked by its youthful freshness and enthusiasm for the faith, and in this way enable many more to encounter the Lord and to grow in the spiritual life.

Entrusting your endeavors to the intercession of the Virgin Mary and to Saint Francis of Assisi, I warmly impart to all of you my Apostolic Blessing.

Thank you.



The HOLY SEE

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