



## **To Ignore God Would Imperil Man, Says Pope Urges Evangelization as He Recalls World Youth Day**

CASTEL GANDOLFO, Italy, AUG. 28, 2005 (Zenit.org).- It is urgent to lead modern man "to discover the true face of God," says Benedict XVI.

Wherever God is not acknowledged "as the supreme Good, man's dignity is endangered," the Pope contended, in an Angelus address he directed today to pilgrims and visitors who gathered in the courtyard of the papal summer residence of Castel Gandolfo.

The Holy Father also reflected again, as he did in last Wednesday's general audience, on World Youth Day in Cologne, Germany.

Last Sunday Benedict XVI presided at the closing Mass of the Youth Day that attracted more than 1 million to Marienfeld, near Cologne.

The Mass closed an event that the Pope described today as "an extraordinary ecclesial experience" and "a providential event of grace for the whole Church."

The Pope continued: "Speaking with the bishops of Germany, shortly before returning to Italy, I said that young people have given their pastors, and in a certain way all believers, a message which is at the same time a request: 'Help us to be disciples and witnesses of Christ. As the Magi, we came to find him and to worship him.'"

The Holy Father said that it is a duty, not only for young people, but also for communities and pastors themselves, to be "ever more aware of a fundamental fact of evangelization: wherever God is not in first place, wherever he is not acknowledged and worshipped as the Supreme Good, man's dignity is endangered."

A priority

Therefore, it is "urgent to lead the man of today to 'discover' the true face of God," and, "like the Magi," to prostrate oneself "before Him and to worship him," exhorted the Bishop of Rome, alluding to the motto of the recent World Youth Day.

"Adoration is not a luxury, but a priority," he said.

In fact, "to seek Christ must be the incessant longing of believers, of youths and adults, of the faithful and their pastors," a search that must be "encouraged, supported and guided," the Pope added.

Because faith "is not simply the adherence to an ensemble of dogmas complete in itself that would slake the thirst for God present in the human spirit," said the Holy Father, but rather "it projects for man a path in time toward a God ever new in his infinitude."

"The Christian is therefore at the same time one who seeks and one who finds. It is precisely this that makes the Church young, open to the future, rich in hope for the whole of humanity," said Benedict XVI.

The invitation to this search "does not hold good just for this life but also for eternity," as the "discovery of 'God's face' is never exhausted," he added.

"The more we enter into the splendor of divine love, the more beautiful it is to go forward in the search, so that, 'to the degree that love grows, so grows the search for him who is found,'" said the Pope, citing reflections of St. Augustine, whose liturgical memorial is usually celebrated on Aug. 28.

After praying the Angelus and greeting pilgrims in several languages, the Holy Father referred to the theme proposed for World Youth Day 2008, in Australia, when he invited Spanish-speaking pilgrims as "genuine disciples of Christ" to carry their cross, "because in the Cross is the salvation of the world."