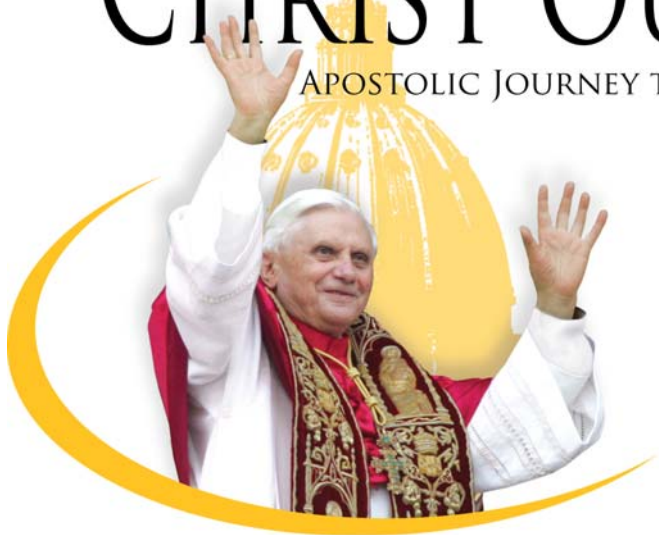


POPE BENEDICT XVI
CHRIST OUR HOPE
APOSTOLIC JOURNEY TO THE UNITED STATES 2008



PRAYER SERVICE

Opening Prayer

Loving God,

Help us to open our hearts to your good news, delivered through work of your servant, Benedict. Let his visit to the United States bring us a renewed understanding of your abundant love for us and empower us to be messengers of hope in the world.

First Reading Acts 2:1-4

A Reading from the Book of Acts . . .

When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled,
they were all in one place together.
And suddenly there came from the sky
a noise like a strong driving wind,
and it filled the entire house in which they were.
Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire,
which parted and came to rest on each one of them.
And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit
and began to speak in different tongues,
as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim.

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Second Reading Matthew 9:34-35

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew

Jesus went around to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness. At the sight of the crowds, his heart was moved with pity for them because they were troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest."

The Gospel of the Lord

All: Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection

For two thousand years, our Church has been guided by the Holy Spirit working through each of us and particularly through the instruction of our Holy Fathers, the popes. As we strive to follow Jesus—to be his laborers in the fields-- so too, the pope strives to help us be faithful to the Gospels and to stand strong in the face of challenges to our morality.

In your small groups, you have been given a quotation—something that was written or spoken by one of our popes. Take a few moments to discuss the quotations using the following questions as a guide. Be prepared to share your thoughts with the larger group.

- ❖ What does this statement tell us about God?
- ❖ What does this statement call us to do?

Closing Prayer

Lord, watch over your servant Benedict that he may have a safe and fruitful journey to the United States. May all of us open our hearts and minds to hear your message of hope, love and peace that we may act in ways that are holy. We ask this through our Lord, Jesus Christ.

All: Amen.

**The Spirit of the Lord
always remembers every
individual, and wishes,
particularly through you
young people, to stir up the
wind and fire of a new
Pentecost in the world.**

--Pope Benedict XVI

What does this statement tell us about God?

What does this statement call us to do?

All life demands struggle.
Those who have everything
given to them become lazy,
selfish, and insensitive to
the real values of life. The
very striving and hard work
that we so constantly try to
avoid is the major building
block in the person we are
today.

--Pope Paul VI

What does this statement tell us about God?

What does this statement call us to do?

**Consult not your fears but
your hopes and your
dreams. Think not about
your frustrations, but about
your unfulfilled potential.
Concern yourself not with
what you tried and failed in,
but with what it is still
possible for you to do.**

--Pope John XXIII

What does this statement tell us about God?

What does this statement call us to do?

**Do not abandon yourselves
to despair. We are the
Easter people and
hallelujah is our song.**

-- Pope John Paul II

What does this statement tell us about God?

What does this statement call us to do?

**Only the love of God can
renew man's heart, and only
if the heart of paralyzed
humanity is healed can it
get up and walk. The love
of God is the true force that
renews the world.**

--Pope Benedict XVI

What does this statement tell us about God?

What does this statement call us to do?

Having a clear faith, based on the creed of the church, is often labeled today as a fundamentalism. ...

Whereas relativism, which is letting oneself be tossed and 'swept along by every wind of teaching,' looks like the only attitude acceptable to today's standards.

--Pope Benedict XVI

What does this statement tell us about God?

What does this statement call us to do?

**Do not be afraid to be holy!
Have the courage and
humility to present
yourselves to the world
determined to be holy, since
full, true freedom is born
from holiness.**

--Pope John Paul II

What does this statement tell us about God?

What does this statement call us to do?

The Church needs you, as young people, to manifest to the world the face of Jesus Christ, visible in the Christian community. Without this young face, the Church would appear disfigured.

--Pope Benedict XVI

What does this statement tell us about God?

What does this statement call us to do?

**The more you cling to Jesus
the more capable you will
become of being close to
one another.**

-- Pope John Paul II

What does this statement tell us about God?

What does this statement call us to do?