

life. And I want to make a comment here regarding the consecrated life. I would like to thank Sister Tobiana and her community for the respect and good humor with which they took care of St. John Paul II.

*The message during these days in Krakow has been a call to generosity, to daring, to a form of rebellion against injustice. How can a young person respond to this call?*

In Krakow, the city of St. Faustina Kowalska, the message of mercy has deep roots. It is my firm hope that the decisions of generosity that this world youth meeting can awaken in the hearts of young people, in this city and in this Jubilee Year of Mercy proclaimed by Pope Francis, will also include going forth to meet the needs of peace and justice of the men and women of our time. I am thinking, above all, of so many cases, I repeat, of material need, and also spiritual need, that require the response of the “new imagination of charity” St. John Paul II spoke about.

*World Youth Day is not only a meeting of hundreds of thousands of young people; there are almost a thousand bishops here. This is perhaps the largest gathering of bishops since the Second Vatican Council. What does this event mean for you, as a bishop and prelate of Opus Dei?*

These are days in which one feels very deeply the communion of the whole Church. For me it has been wonderful to see once again

our beloved Cardinal Dziwisz, and to recall—on seeing him—all the help and accompaniment he provided the holy Polish pontiff. And with him, to pray for each other during these days of fraternity, which are made more intense by tangibly sensing the Church’s universality.

It was also wonderful to see the unity between the young people and the pastors, and to ask these young people many times—now and in the future of the Church—to pray for us, so that we pastors be entirely Christ’s, in such a way that, following closely in his footsteps, we may spend ourselves in our mission of serving and loving all men and women.

### “Understanding Mother Teresa,” in *La Vanguardia*, (September 4, 2016)

“I vividly remember her diminutive figure, bent over by a lifetime at the service of the poorest of the poor, but always filled with an inexhaustible interior energy. The energy of love for Christ.” These moving words were spoken by John Paul II shortly after the death of Mother Teresa of Calcutta. He knew her very well.

We all felt the impact of that diminutive figure, bent over by the years, but with a surprising spirit and a moving mission of serving

the most helpless. She described herself in this way: “By blood I am Albanian. By citizenship, Indian. In what refers to faith, I am a Catholic nun. By my vocation, I belong to the world. In what refers to my heart, I belong totally to the Heart of Jesus.”

When she began, she could not have suspected that she would become world famous. She never intended this. But in her person, we saw very clearly an essential aspect of the Christian message: concern for the most neglected. And thus she moved many people. Also, at the end, she had a few critics, who thought that serving the poor out of love for Christ was to deform that service, with the intention to evangelize.

Certainly one can work for others, and many do so, without a religious motive, through a philanthropic conviction or through feelings of compassion. These are very good and deeply human intentions and concerns. But the tie between love for God and love for our neighbor reveals something more: a keynote of the Christian message that, by canonizing Mother Teresa, the Church wants to remind mankind of.

Confronted with Jesus’ invitation—to give one’s life for others, loving everyone, including one’s enemies—we come face to face with our human limitations: lack of energy and strength and talents, but also the resistance of

laziness and selfishness. And our heart can end up saying: it seems very beautiful, but I don’t see myself as capable of it.

Christian faith and our experience in life teach us that, if we really want to undertake this dedication and ask God for it, his help doesn’t fail us. Therefore the hearts of the saints always have that curious combination of deep humility: sensing both one’s own incapacity and the strength of God’s love.

The Christian saints are not supermen or superwomen who achieve everything by their overwhelming personality, relentless will power, overflowing energy and irresistible drive. Neither do they usually stand out for their economic or technical expertise. The explanation of their strength and their importance for other Christians resides not in their being exceptions to nature, but rather in their letting God’s love work in them.

On the same occasion that we recalled at the beginning of this article, Pope John Paul II pointed out the key to understanding this small and at the same time gigantic woman: “Her mission began each day, before dawn, in front of the Eucharist. In the silence of contemplation, Mother Teresa of Calcutta felt resonating in her heart Jesus’ cry on the Cross: ‘I thirst.’ That cry sensed in the depth of her heart impelled her

through the streets of Calcutta and through all the slum areas of the world, in search of Jesus in the poor, in the abandoned and in the dying.” And I would like to add: in orphans and those not wanted by their parents.

## “Mercy Is Love That Is Turned Into Service,” in *Avvenire*, Italy (November 20, 2016)

At the close of the Holy Year of Mercy, a strong sense of gratitude unites the whole Church. In first place, filial gratitude to the Blessed Trinity, whose abundant gifts have enabled us to experience God’s infinite love for each man and woman, for each of us. And also union with the intentions of Pope Francis, who has convoked this Jubilee to highlight more fully this fundamental aspect of the faith—that God is an immensely good Father—and to remind us that the path of our happiness passes through being dispensers of mercy.

For our gratitude to be fully sincere, it needs to be united to the deep desire to improve personally. A person who has experienced mercy—by having recourse to the sacrament of confession, spending time in prayer, passing through a holy door or accepting the help of a brother or sister—is called to com-

municate it to others through their own life.

This Jubilee should leave a deep imprint on our soul. And it will do so if we grow in our desire for holiness, if we have more frequent recourse to the sacraments, if we strive to improve our way of being. In short, it is an opportunity to help us embody more fully the image of Christ that others should be able to see in our life.

In the many places in today’s world where the echo of the Gospel is no longer heard, we Christians face the challenge of the “first evangelization.” “Where is your God,” these people might ask us. And they will discover him in our prayer for those who offended us, in our care for the destitute, in our sympathy for those who are trapped in their vices, in the consolation we offer those who live alone, in the forgiveness we extend where society only speaks about justice, in the Christian coherence of our daily lives, in our work and family... By acting in this way, we too will grow in our intimacy with God, because by acting in his name we will come to know him better and identify ourselves with him.

“If you wish to find God, seek him where he is hidden: in the needy, in the sick, in the hungry, in the imprisoned,” Pope Francis recently advised. We would impoverish our inner world if we were to refuse to deal with those who displease us, who are different,