



The Holy See

VIDEO MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS TO YOUNG PEOPLE ON THE OCCASION OF THE 34th WORLD YOUTH DAY 2019

[PANAMA, 22 - 27 JANUARY 2019]

[Multimedia]

Dear young people,

World Youth Day is fast approaching. It will be held in Panama in January and the theme is Mary's response to God's call, "I am the servant of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word" (*Lk 1:38*).

Her words are a brave and generous "yes". It is the positive reply of one who understands the secret of vocation – to go beyond oneself and place oneself at the service of others. Our lives only find meaning in service to God and to other people.

There are many young people, both believers and nonbelievers, who when they come to the end of a stage in their studies, feel a desire to do something for those who are suffering. This is a strength in young people, a strength that all of you possess. It is a strength that can change the world. It is a revolution that can overturn the powerful forces at work in our world. It is the "revolution" of service.

To be at the service of others does not only mean to be ready for action. It means also to be in conversation with God with an attitude of listening, just like Mary. She listened to what the angel said to her and then she responded. It is by relating to God in the silence of our hearts that we discover our identity and the vocation to which God is calling us. It can be expressed in different ways: in marriage, in consecrated life, in the priesthood... All these are ways of following Jesus. The important thing is to discover what God wants from us and to be brave enough to say "yes".

Mary was a happy woman, and this is because she replied generously to God and opened her heart to God's plan for her. When God has a proposition for us, like the one he had for Mary, it is not intended to extinguish our dreams, but to ignite our aspirations. Propositions like this are meant to make our lives fruitful and produce many smiles and happy hearts. To respond to God positively is to take a first step towards being happy and towards making many people happy.

Dear young people, take courage, enter within yourselves and say to God: "What do you want from me?" Allow God to answer you. Then you will see how your life is transformed and filled with joy.

With the upcoming World Youth Day in our sights, I invite you all to prepare for it by following and taking part in the initiatives that are happening. They will help you on your path towards this goal. May Our Lady be with you on this pilgrimage, and may her example encourage you to be brave and generous in your response.

Have a good journey on your way to Panama! And, please, do not forget to pray for me. See you soon.