

WAY OF THE CROSS WITH THE YOUNG PEOPLE
ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER
Jordan Park in Błonia, Kraków

29 July 2016

[Link](#)

I was hungry and you gave me food,
I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink,
I was a stranger and you welcomed me,
I was naked and you gave me clothing,
I was sick and you took care of me,
I was in prison and you visited me (Mt 25:35-36).

These words of Jesus answer the question that arises so often in our minds and hearts: "Where is God?" Where is God, if evil is present in our world, if there are men and women who are hungry and thirsty, homeless, exiles and refugees? Where is God, when innocent persons die as a result of violence, terrorism and war? Where is God, when cruel diseases break the bonds of life and affection? Or when children are exploited and demeaned, and they too suffer from grave illness? Where is God, amid the anguish of those who doubt and are troubled in spirit? These are questions that humanly speaking have no answer. We can only look to Jesus and ask him. And Jesus' answer is this: "God is in them". Jesus is in them; he suffers in them and deeply identifies with each of them. He is so closely united to them as to form with them, as it were, "one body". [...]

By following Jesus along the Way of the Cross, we have once again realized the importance of imitating him through the fourteen works of mercy. These help us to be open to God's mercy, to implore the grace to appreciate that without mercy we can do nothing; without mercy, neither I nor you nor any of us can do a thing. Let us first consider the seven corporal works of mercy: feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, sheltering the homeless, visiting the sick and those in prison, and burying the dead. Freely we have received, so freely let us give. We are called to serve the crucified Jesus in all those who are marginalized, to touch his sacred flesh in those who are disadvantaged, in those who hunger and thirst, in the naked and imprisoned, the sick and unemployed, in those who are persecuted, refugees and migrants. There we find our God; there we touch the Lord. Jesus himself told us this when he explained the criterion on which we will be judged: whenever we do these things to the least of our brothers and sisters, we do them to him (cf. Mt 25:31-46). [...]