**Homily delivered by Pope Francis on Sunday, 6th August at the final Mass of World Youth Day in Lisbon, Portugal.**

After these exciting days, surely we feel like repeating the words of the Apostle Peter on the mount of the Transfiguration: "Lord, it is good for us to be here!" (Mt 17:4). Indeed, how good it was to share this experience with Jesus and with one another, and how we have joined in prayer. Yet, in the wake of these grace-filled days, we can also ask an important question: What will we take back with us as we come down from the mountain to resume our daily lives?

Drawing upon the Gospel we have heard, I would like to answer that question with three verbs: to shine, to listen, and to be unafraid.

To shine. Jesus is transfigured and - as the Gospel tells us - "his face shone like the sun" (Mt 17:2). Shortly before this, he had predicted his passion and death on the cross, shattering the disciples' image of a powerful and worldly Messiah, and disappointing their expectations. Now, to help them embrace the loving plan of God who is glorified in and through the cross, Jesus takes three of the disciples, Peter, James, and John, and leads them up the mountain, where he is transfigured before them. His face shines like the sun and his clothes become dazzling white. Through this brilliant burst of light, Jesus prepares the disciples for the dark night they will have to endure; this overwhelming experience of light would help them to endure the dark hours of Gethsemane and Calvary.

Dear friends, we too need a burst of light if we are to face the darkness of the night, the challenges of life, the fears that plague us, and the gloom that often overtakes us. That light, the Gospel tells us, has a name. Yes, the light that has come to illumine the world is Jesus himself (cf. Jn 1:9). He is the sun that never sets but continues to shine even amid the darkness of the night. After these days together, we can think of another page of the Bible, and in the words of the priest Ezra, ask that the Lord our God "brighten our eyes" (Ezra 9:8). In the light of Christ, we too are "transfigured"; our eyes and faces can shine with a new light. Brothers and sisters, this is what the Church and the world expect of you: to be radiant in your youthfulness, to bring the light of the Gospel everywhere, and to be beacons of hope in these dark times!

Let me tell you something. We do not radiate light by putting ourselves in the spotlight, projecting a perfect image or appearing to be powerful and successful. No, we radiate light when we welcome Jesus into our hearts and learn to love as he does. Then the light of true beauty shines forth: the radiance of a life that is willing to risk everything for the sake of love. A philosopher (S. Kierkegaard) once wrote that the beauty of Christ's revolutionary message consists in seeing even what is unlovable as worthy of love. In other words, to love our neighbours as they are, not only when they agree with us, but also when they are unkind or disagreeable. With the light of Jesus, we can do this! You young people are capable of that kind of love, and thus able to break down certain walls and prejudices, and to bring the light of Christ's saving love to the world. May you always radiate that love! May you always radiate Jesus, "the light of the world" (Jn 8:12)!

The second verb is to listen. On the mount of the Transfiguration, a bright cloud overshadows the disciples and the Father's voice proclaims that Jesus is his beloved Son. The command that the Father gives is simple and direct: "Listen to him" (Mt 17:5). Those words say it all. The entire Christian life is contained in these, the last words spoken by the Father in Matthew's Gospel: Listen to him. We are to listen to Jesus, talk to him, read his words and put them into practice, and follow his footsteps. Jesus has words of eternal life for us because he reveals that God is both Father and love, and because, in the Holy Spirit, we too become his beloved children. That is what we need in this life, then: not fame, success or money, but the realisation that we are not alone, that we always have Christ at our side, that we can start and end each day certain of the Lord's embrace. We need to listen to Jesus in order to trust that we are loved, embraced by a love that never fails.

Let us remember, too, that by listening to the Lord, being open to all his surprises, also makes us capable of listening to one another, becoming sensitive to situations all around us, to other cultures, to the pleas of the poor and vulnerable, and to the cry of our wounded and mistreated Earth. How good it is to listen to Jesus, to listen to one another, and thus to become capable of dialogue in a world where so many people go through life alone and concerned only with themselves.

To shine, to listen and, finally, to be unafraid. These were the last words spoken by Jesus on the mount of the Transfiguration, to encourage his fearful disciples: "Get up and do not be afraid!" (Mt 17:7). After having a foretaste of Easter glory, after being bathed in light divine and hearing the Father's voice, the disciples can come down from the mountain and face the challenges that await them on the plain below. It is the same for us: if we cherish the light of Jesus and his words within us, we can live each day with hearts free of fear.

As young people, you have great dreams, but often you may fear that they cannot come true. Sometimes you can think that you are not up to the challenge, and you may be tempted to lose heart, to think you fall short, or to disguise your pain with a smile. As young people, you want to change the world and work for justice and peace. You devote all your energy and creativity to this, yet it still seems insufficient. Yet the Church and the world need you, the young, as much as the earth needs rain. Jesus now speaks to you, dear young people, who are the present and the future of our world. To all of you he says: "Do not be afraid!"

Today, as much as ever, the words spoken by Saint John Paul II at one World Youth Day ring true: "It is Jesus whom you seek whenever you dream of happiness. When you find little that brings you satisfaction, he is there, waiting for you. He is the beauty that you so greatly desire. He is the one who instils in you the thirst for fulfilment that does not allow you to settle for compromise. He is the one who urges you to set aside the masks that deceive. He is the one who enables you to understand the deepest desires of your heart, and to make the decisions that others may want to discourage you from taking. Jesus is the one who stirs within you the desire to do something great with your lives... Do not be afraid to entrust yourselves to him!" (Prayer Vigil, Rome, 19 August 2000).

Dear young people, I would like to look each of you in the eye and say: Do not be afraid! Now I will tell you something even more beautiful: Jesus himself is now looking at you. He knows you; he knows what is in your heart; he smiles at you and tells you once again that he loves you, always and infinitely. Always and infinitely. Go forth then, bringing God's radiant smile to everyone! Go and bear witness to the joy of faith, to the hope that warms your hearts, and to the love that you bring to everything you do. Shine with the light of Christ. Listen to him so that you, too, may become the light of the world. And do not be afraid, for the Lord loves you and walks at your side. With Jesus, life is born anew, always.