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Pope's video message to German Catholics

Vatican City, 27 May 2016 – On Wednesday afternoon the Holy Father sent a video message for the Katholikentag, the 100th Day for German Catholics, held this year in Leipzig, on the theme "Behold the man".

In the video message, screened at the opening of the event, the Pope underlines that the participants in the Katholikentag show that they live the joy of the Gospel, that they have good relations with Christians of other confessions, and give authentic witness of Christ with their concrete commitment to assisting the weak and needy.

"Behold the man! You have gathered with this motto. This shows beautifully what is important. It is not doing, or external success that counts, but the capacity to stop, to look up, to be attentive towards others and to offer them what is truly missing. Every human being desires communion and peace. Everyone needs peaceful co-existence. But this can grow only when we also build inner peace in our heart. Many people live in a constant hurry. In this way all that they have inside them tends to be overwhelmed. This also affects how we treat the environment. It is necessary to grant oneself more time to recover a serene harmony with the world, with creation, and also with the Creator. Let us try, in contemplation and prayer, to achieve ever greater familiarity with God. And gradually we will discover that the heavenly Father wants what is good for us. He wants to see us happy, full of joy and serene. It is this familiarity with God that also inspires our mercy. Just as the Father loves, so does His children. As He is merciful, we too are called upon to be merciful towards each other. Let us allow ourselves to be touched by God's mercy, also through a good confession, to become increasingly merciful like the Father."

"Behold the man!" So often we find that man is mistreated in society. We see how others judge the value of his life and how they cause him, in old age and sickness, to die too soon. We see how people are compromised, beaten down here and there, and deprived of their dignity, because they are without employment or are refugees. We see here the suffering and martyred Jesus, Whose gaze falls on the evil and brutality, in all their dimensions, that men suffer or make each other suffer in this world."

The Holy Father concluded by expressing his hope that all participants in the Katholikentag in Leipzig, and all faithful in Germany, may grant greater space in life to the voice of the poor and the oppressed. "Support each other in the sharing of experiences and ideas on how to bring the Good News of Christ to mankind. Let us

implore the Divine Consoler, the Holy Spirit, to give us the courage and strength to be witnesses of that hope, that is God, for all humanity."
