

# origins

CNS documentary service

## Homily at Mass With Teens for Year of Mercy

Pope Francis

*Happiness is “not an app that you can download on your phones, nor will the latest update bring you freedom and grandeur in love,” Pope Francis told thousands of teenagers. Youth from around the world flocked to Rome for a special Year of Mercy event for teens aged 13-16. Celebrating Mass with the young people April 24, the pope told them true freedom is priceless and comes from making the courageous decision to do good and not from the mediocre belief that happiness can be easily obtained through worldly possessions and fashion. A person’s happiness “has no price” and “cannot be bought,” the pope told them during the Mass*

*“The free person is the one who chooses what is good, what is pleasing to God, even if it requires effort, even if it is not easy.”*

*in St. Peter’s Square. Gray clouds looming over St. Peter’s Square did little to deter an estimated 100,000 young teens and pilgrims from attending the Mass. In his homily, the pope encouraged the youths to carry out the “enormous responsibility” entrusted to the disciples by Jesus in the Sunday Gospel reading: “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” Love, he said, is the “only valid ‘document’ identifying us as Christians” and the only path to happiness. The pope spoke in Italian; a Vatican translation of his homily follows, copyright © 2016 by Libreria Editrice Vaticana.*

**b**y this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (Jn 13:35). Dear young friends, what an enormous responsibility the Lord gives us today! He tells us that the world will recognize the disciples of Jesus by the way they love one another. Love, in other words, is the Christian’s identity card, the only valid “document” identifying us as Christians. It is the only valid document.

If this card expires and is not constantly renewed, we stop being witnesses of the Master. So I ask you, Do you wish to say yes to Jesus’ invitation to be his disciples? Do you wish to be his faithful friends?

The true friends of Jesus stand out essentially by genuine love: not some “pie in the sky” love; no, it is a genuine love that shines forth in their way of life.

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