

THE WORDS OF THE HOLY FATHER

The following are some quotes from Benedict XVI during his visit to the United States:

Joint Statement by President Bush and the Holy Father:

- The [pope and the president] reaffirmed their total rejection of terrorism as well as the manipulation of religion to justify immoral and violent acts against innocents. They further touched on the need to confront terrorism with appropriate means that respect the human person and his or her rights.

Welcoming Ceremony on the White House South Lawn:

- “America’s Catholics have made, and continue to make, an excellent contribution to the life of their country.”
- “As the nation faces the increasingly complex political and ethical issues of our time, I am confident that the American people will find in their religious beliefs a precious source of insight and an inspiration to pursue reasoned, responsible and respectful dialogue in the effort to build a more humane and free society.”

Meeting with Catholic Educators:

- “A particular responsibility...is to evoke among the young the desire for the act of faith, encouraging them to commit themselves to the ecclesial life that follows from this belief. It is here that freedom reaches the certainty of truth. In choosing to live by that truth, we embrace the fullness of the life of faith which is given to us in the Church.”
- “We observe today a timidity in the face of the category of the good and aimless pursuit of novelty parading as the realization of freedom. We witness an assumption that every

experience is of equal worth and a reluctance to admit imperfection and mistakes. And particularly disturbing, is the reduction of the precious and delicate area of education in sexuality to management of 'risk', bereft of any reference to the beauty of conjugal love."

Meeting with the Bishops of the U.S.:

- "While it is true that this country is marked by a genuinely religious spirit, the subtle influence of secularism can nevertheless color the way people allow their faith to influence their behavior. Is it consistent to profess our beliefs in church on Sunday, and then during the week to promote business practices or medical procedures contrary to those beliefs? Is it consistent for practicing Catholics to ignore or exploit the poor and the marginalized, to promote sexual behavior contrary to Catholic moral teaching, or to adopt positions that contradict the right to life of every human being from conception to natural death? Any tendency to treat religion as a private matter must be resisted. Only when their faith permeates every aspect of their lives do Christians become truly open to the transforming power of the Gospel."

- "Children deserve to grow up with a healthy understanding of sexuality and its proper place in human relationships. They should be spared the degrading manifestations and the crude manipulation of sexuality so prevalent today... What does it mean to speak of child protection when pornography and violence can be viewed in so many homes through media widely available today? All have a part to play in this task—not only parents, religious leaders, teachers and catechists, but the media and entertainment industries as well.

Address to the United Nations:

- "In the name of freedom, there has to be a correlation between rights and duties, by which every person is called to

assume responsibility for his or her choices, made as a consequence of entering into relations with others. Here our thoughts turn also to the way the results of scientific research and technological advances have sometimes been applied. Notwithstanding the enormous benefits that humanity can gain, some instances of this represent a clear violation of the order of creation, to the point where not only is the sacred character of life contradicted, but the human person and the family are robbed of their natural identity.”

- “Entrusting exclusively to individual States, with their laws and institutions, the final responsibility to meet the aspirations of persons, communities and entire peoples, can sometimes have consequences that exclude the possibility of a social order respectful of the dignity and rights of the person. On the other hand, a vision of life firmly anchored in the religious dimension can help to achieve this, since recognition of the transcendent value of every man and woman favors conversion of heart, which leads to a commitment to resist violence, terrorism and war, and to promote justice and peace.”

- “The full guarantee of religious liberty cannot be limited to the free exercise of worship, but has to give due consideration to the public dimension of religion, and hence to the possibility of believers playing their part in building the social order. Indeed, they actually do so, for example through their influential and generous involvement in a vast network of initiatives which extend from Universities, scientific institutions and schools to health care agencies and charitable organizations in the service of the poorest and most marginalized. Refusal to recognize the contribution to society that is rooted in the religious dimension and in the quest for the Absolute—by its nature, expressing communion between persons—would effectively privilege an individualistic approach, and would fragment the unity of the person.”