

30/07/2024  
121c – engl.

PRESS RELEASE  
GERMAN BISHOPS' CONFERENCE



*Check against delivery!*

**Statement**  
**by Auxiliary Bishop Johannes Wübbe (Osnabrück),**  
**President of the Commission for Youth Ministry**  
**of the German Bishops' Conference,**  
**at the Papal Audience on the occasion of the**  
**XIII International Pilgrimage of Altar Servers**  
**on St. Peter's Square on 30 July 2024**

Dear Altar Servers,

I would like to personally welcome you all to this place. I'm glad to see you here!

The logo of our XIII international pilgrimage to Rome shows the keys of St. Peter. These keys represent the authority and the responsibility which Jesus gave to Peter, and through him to the whole Church. But these are more than just historical symbols. For me and hopefully for many other people too, they are a sign of hope and of the future. This is a future which you are; for the world and for the Church.

If you wish to do so, you altar servers carry these keys of St. Peter in you.

Through your lives, your commitment, your faith and your service, you help to make the world a better place day by day. You are the bridge builders creating a link between the generations, and thus making the living presence of God visible in the world.

Keys can open doors, you know that. Just imagine, to put it symbolically, that you are a key and can open up new things and good things, healing things, if you are willing to take responsibility and play an active role in shaping the future of the Church.

The ring that you will find on the keys in the logo bears the motto "with you" from *Isaiah* 41:10: "Fear not, I am with you; be not dismayed; I am your God." These words are a promise and a reminder that God is always with us. He has

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given each and every one of you a key to change this world. He has called on you to bring light into the darkness, to sow peace where there is unrest, and to live love where hate prevails.

You can do great things with God's help. Allow yourself to be guided by His Spirit and encouraged by the community that you will experience in these few days. Be courageous and creative in your service and in your everyday lives. The world needs your enthusiasm, your ideas and your faith. You are not only the future of the Church, you are also Her present. Your deeds, your words and your example can already change and shape the face of the Church today.

Remember that each key is unique, just like each and every one of you is unique. Each and every one of you has special gifts and talents which God has given you. Use these gifts to do good, spread joy and help others. You have the power to make the world a little better. Trust in God and in the fact that He will never let you down.

So go out in the knowledge that you are not alone. God is "with you" – He takes each step with you; He makes you stronger, and gives you power. Use the keys which He has given you to open doors to a better world. Trust that you can make a difference, with God's help.

I want to thank you for your service and for your commitment. Go out into the world, live full of joy and confidence, as during these days, and be sure that God is with you, today and for all days.