

# TOGETHER pilgrims on the way towards MADRID 2011

Spiritual journey in the company of CA young saints

Seventh stage (December 2010)

## TIME TO MEDITATE

**Luke 2,16-21 • YOU CALL US TO WORK WITH YOU. WE WOULD LIKE TO GO WHEREVER YOU SEND US, TO ANNOUNCE YOUR NAME, TO CURE IN YOUR NAME, TO ACCOMPANY OUR BRETHREN UP TO YOU**

*"So they went in haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known the message that had been told them about this child. All who heard it were amazed by what had been told them by the shepherds. And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart. Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told to them. When eight days were completed for his circumcision, he was named Jesus, the name given him by the angel before he was conceived in the womb".*

When life presents us with some unexpected novelty we feel we are growing. This happens when we hear a bit of news which arouses our curiosity, when it makes us re-act, when we feel we have to go and see for ourselves, when we feel we have to relate and listen, when we are made to think. We feel so pleased then. Only at the very end of all this do we succeed in summing up all that has happened under a title and to understand that behind this there was a whole story which finally we managed to decipher. All this may seem ridiculous, but during the process, outlined in these few lines, sometimes it takes years from the time the event happens to the time when we succeed in understanding what it was all about. The novelty has to take its time and the greater and the more important it is, the longer it takes us to assimilate it.

The great novelty of Jesus in the history of the world and in each one of us seems to be related in rather an uninspiring way: a baby, a mother, a visit by poor shepherds ... It is the shepherds who represent us: they had heard, they came, they related and heard, they were joyful, they returned to their ordinary way of life. Mary kept all this in her heart. The name was given at the very end realizing that the whole story had started with the angel much before. Thus God became one of us, having waited patiently for 4000 years to arrive at this moment. Thus God teaches us how to work with Him for our brethren. When we hear of this novelty, He inspires us to want to know, He shows us the place where we can go and see, where we can relate and listen, where we can think and where we can then find our joy. He assures us that sooner or later there will come a moment when we can give a name to all that has happened. And this will be the name of Jesus.

### IN THE COMPANY OF SAINTLY YOUNG PEOPLE



#### **BLESSÈD LOJZE GROZDE**

##### **Short biographical notes**

Lojze was born on the 27 May 1923 at Gorenje Vodale, in Slovenia, He was baptized on the same day in the Trzisce na Dolenjskem parish church in the diocese of Novo Mesto. He was an illegitimate son. His natural father never acknowledged him as his son all through his life. His mother married a certain Kovac when Lojze was four years old. Very often Kovac was absent from home and his mother had to go work to sustain herself and her son. Lojze was thus raised up by his maternal grandparents and an aunt. He was brought up in a typically farming environment which was characterized by poverty and hard daily work. Obviously this had a great influence on Lojze and was reflected in his timid and reserved

temperament. The suffering caused by the absence of his mother, who was always fully engaged in work, helped him mature at an early age. When he started attending the Elementary School at the age of six one could already see that his education in faith and his interior life were very much more developed than that of the other children in his class. He continued with his Grammar School education in the capital, Ljubljana. There he spent eight years of intensive profitable study. With the help of a number of benefactors, he could live in the Boarding School in Marijanische. Everyone could see that he was very generous in helping his friends. He started writing poems. In 1936 when he was thirteen years old he became a member of the Marian Congregation and consecrated himself to Mary Immaculate. Later he became the president of this Congregation. During his secondary school years, encouraged by some of his friends, he became a Catholic Action member. He was convinced that Our Lady had guided him to become a CA member so that he could widen his spiritual horizons and his field of action. He wanted to do everything for the Kingdom of God and to lead other young people to Christ. During these years he also thought of becoming a priest but after a long reflection he understood that he could work more for God's kingdom as a CA lay member. So he undertook an apostolic way of life based on a faith which was reinforced by the daily Eucharist. He was profoundly attached to Slovenia, his native country, and already during the Second World War he could foresee the dangers which resulted from the communist revolution. He had to meet his death in a war context. At the end of 1942 he decided to return to his native place to spend Christmas with his mother. The journey was very dangerous because of the many armed partisans. Lojze did not give up. His desire to re-embrace his mother was too strong. It was on the first days of 1943 when the partisans, thinking that he was a courier of the anti-communist police, captured him near the Cistercian Abbey in Stična and tortured him near the restaurant at Vidmar. After great suffering he died as a Christian martyr. His body was found on the following 23rd February by some children and was buried at Šentrupert na Dolenjskem, near the place where he was born. Very soon his tomb became a pilgrimage site.

## **Lojze words**

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*From his diary*

«I do not want to be mediocre. A work, so beautiful and sublime like that proposed by Catholic Action is worth living at all cost.»

«A young Catholic Action member should be ready to sacrifice himself even to the point of martyrdom and death.»

## **A young man like us**

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«[...] the fact, that today we have enrolled a son of this beloved nation, Lojze Grozde, with the blessed, is definitely the work of divine providence. In his early youth, he seriously chose to be Christ's scholar. Kneeling in the presence of the Blessed sacrament, in deep and faithful adoration, he understood the meaning of giving his life fully to Christ even ready to sacrifice it. When he was not yet twenty years old Lojze was martyred and thus he fully conformed with Jesus.

So may Lojze Grozde be our model and intercessor and may he help us to be always faithful to the Lord in fraternal communion as a Church».

Card. Tarcisio Bertone, *Homily during the beatification mass*, Celje 13 June 2010

«On the other hand, this morning, Cardinal Bertone, as my delegate in Slovenia, presided at the celebration for the conclusion of the National Eucharistic Congress during which he beatified a young martyr, Lojze Grozde. Lojze had a special devotion to the Eucharist which nourished his steadfast faith, his capacity for sacrifice for the salvation of souls and his apostolate in catholic action, in order to lead other young people to Christ».

Benedict XVI, *after the l'Angelus*, 13 June 2010