



# The Holy See

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**LETTER OF HIS HOLINESS  
POPE JOHN PAUL II  
TO THE APOSTOLIC ADMINISTRATOR OF EUROPEAN RUSSIA  
ON THE OCCASION OF  
THE BLESSING OF THE CHURCH OF THE ASSUMPTION  
(SAINT PETERSBURG 24 MAY 1998)**

*To my Venerable Brother  
Archbishop Tadeusz Kondrusiewicz  
Apostolic Administrator of European Russia*

I am very pleased to express my spiritual presence at the rite of blessing for the Church of the Assumption of the Mother of God, which will be celebrated in St Petersburg next 24 May.

This church, which was once the co-cathedral of the Archbishop of Moghilev and, at the same time, the seminary church, is one of the many testimonies to the Russian people's special devotion to Mary most holy. It is significant that it will be blessed during the month of May, which is traditionally dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, and, in particular, on the day when the liturgy venerates her with the title of Help of Christians.

The idea that in its time this church served the seminary community suggests on this happy occasion that special prayers be said for priestly vocations, so that many young men in the territories of European Russia will respond generously to the Lord who calls them to dedicate their lives to the service of the Gospel. I entrust this intention to Our Lady of the Assumption, who watches with maternal care over the journey of the Christian people and goes before them, as a sign of faith and hope, towards the dawn of the new millennium

May a renewed devotion to the mystery of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary help all the baptized to advance in faith and fraternal love, always looking to the good things of eternity in order to give an effective witness to the kingdom of God in every aspect of social life.

With these wishes I cordially send you, Venerable Brother, and those who will take part in the solemn celebration, a special Apostolic Blessing, which I gladly extend to the whole ecclesial community entrusted to your pastoral care.

*From the Vatican, 18 May 1998.*

**IOANNES PAULUS PP. II**

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