The Holy See

MEETING WITH THE POOR PEOPLE OF
THE "LOS MINAS" DISTRICT

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II

Friday, 26 January 1979

Beloved Sons and Daughters of the "Los Minas" district,

From the first moment of the preparation of my journey to your country, I gave priority to a visit to this district of yours, in order to be able to meet you.

And I wanted to come here just because it is a poor area, in order that you might have the opportunity—I would say to which you have the best claim—of being with the Pope. He sees in you a more living presence of the Lord, who suffers in our neediest brothers, who continues to proclaim blessed the poor in spirit, those who suffer for justice and are pure in heart, who work for peace, have compassion, and keep their hope in Christ the Saviour.

But on calling you to cultivate these spiritual and evangelical values, I wish to make you think of your dignity as men and children of God. I wish to encourage you to be rich in humanity, in love for the family, in solidarity with others. At the same time I exhort you to develop more and more the possibilities you have of obtaining a situation of greater human and Christian dignity.

But what I have to say does not end here. The sight of the reality in which you live must make so many people think of what can be done effectively to remedy your condition.

On behalf of these brothers of ours, I ask all those who can do so to help them to overcome their present situation, in order that, particularly with a better education, they may improve their minds and their hearts, and be architects of their own elevation and of a more advantageous integration in society.

With this urgent appeal to consciences, the Pope encourages your desires for advancement, and with great affection blesses you, your children and relatives, and all the inhabitants of the district