



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY TO KOREA, PAPUA NEW GUINEA,
SOLOMON ISLANDS AND THAILAND **ADDRESS OF POPE JOHN PAUL II
TO THE LEADERS
OF OTHER CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES**

Chapel of the Nunciature of Seoul (Korea)

Sunday, 6 May 1984

Dear Friends, dear fellow Christians,

what more fitting way is there for us to begin this encounter in the Lord than to listen with prayerful hearts to the appeal of the Apostle Paul to the Christians of Ephesus? It is still so apt for us today:

"I plead with you, then, as a prisoner for the Lord, to live a life worthy of the calling you have received, with perfect humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another lovingly. Make every effort to preserve the unity which has the Spirit as its origin and peace as its binding force. There is but one body and one Spirit, just as there is but one hope given all of you by your call. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all, and works through all, and is in all" (*Eph. 1-6*).

1. Yes, "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all". It is in this one Lord Jesus Christ that I have the joy of greeting you today. And our joy is truly mutual, since in this same year of 1984 many of you, especially Presbyterians and Methodists, are celebrating the centenary of the founding of your ecclesial communities in Korea.

How wonderful it is that in this land your predecessors in the faith should also have come to know the Lord Jesus Christ through the written word, through a Korean version of the Bible zealously spread by the laity before the first missionaries ever came to instruct and baptize in his name!

The contribution to the Korean people of your first missionaries, Dr Allen, Dr Underwood and Dr Appenzeller, and their successors, constitutes an important part of the history of this land.

Pioneering work in modern medicine and education, the advancement of women, the inculcation of democratic ideals,

identification with the destiny of the people – all these bear witness to the virtues of your proud past. But again, this would not have been possible without the eager reception given to the Christian faith by the Korean people themselves. Nor have your communities been spared persecution, particularly in the North, but they have been found faithful in the eyes of the Lord.

2. And today, after turbulent times for all the Christian communities, it is indeed heartening to know that an ecumenical version of the Bible in Korean is now widely accepted, wherein "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all" are proclaimed. Again, the fact that people from different ecclesial communities have worked together, among many other things, to publish an important work of theology is surely an encouraging sign of growing collaboration between Christians. Beautiful too is the growing friendship and close collaboration between the Universities of Yonse, Ewha and Sogang.

3. But more than all else, it is to be ardently hoped that all of us, respecting the convictions and consciences of each other, should earnestly strive to be fully one in faith and love, according to the will of Christ, as he is one with the Father, so that the world may believe (Cf. *Jo.* 17, 21). May all of us realize that the credibility of Christ's mission depends on the unity of his disciples.

Through the power of his Resurrection may be Lord Jesus make us one. "To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen" (*2 Petr.* 3, 18).

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