



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC PILGRIMAGE TO INDIA

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
DURING THE VISIT TO THE GOOD SHEPHERD CHURCH
IN THE DIOCESE OF VIJAYAPURAM**

Vijayapuram (India)

Saturday, 8 February 1986

*Dear Bishop Elanjikal,
Dear Friends in Christ,*

I am very pleased to visit Good Shepherd Church, the oldest church of the Diocese of Vijayapuram. Jesus tells us: "I am the Good Shepherd; I know my own and my own know me". What a blessing it is to know Christ, the Good Shepherd, to know him as the Redeemer who laid down his life for the sheep, to know him as the Risen Lord, the source of everlasting joy and life. What a blessing it is to know the Good Shepherd and to believe in him. This gift of faith is the greatest blessing we could ever receive in life.

Saint Paul said: "I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord". With Saint Paul, we too rejoice in the gift which has been given to us. May this joy stir up within us a deep desire to live our faith and to bear witness to it before others. And may the Good Shepherd watch over and protect all the clergy, religious and laity of the Diocese of Vijayapuram.

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