



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER JOHN PAUL II
TO THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE SIXTH INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE «CATHOLIC
CHARISMATIC RENEWAL» Friday, 15 May 1987**

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

1. In the peace and joy of the Holy Spirit I welcome all of you who have come to Rome for the *Sixth International Leaders Charismatic Renewal*. I am very happy to meet you today and, as I begin, I wish to assure you that your love for Christ and your openness to the Spirit of Truth are a most valuable witness in the Church's mission in the world.

You are prayerfully considering, during these days, the words of the Prophet Isaiah which Jesus made his own at the very beginning of his public ministry: "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor*" (Cfr. *Luc. 4, 18*). These words, when read by Jesus in the synagogue at Nazareth, had a profound effect on those listening. As he finished the reading, rolled up the scroll and sat down, "the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him" (*Ibid. 4, 20*). Even in our own time, these prophetic words strike to the heart. They draw us upward in faith to the person of Christ and deepen our desire "*to fix our eyes on him*", the *Redeemer of the world*, the perfect fulfilment of all prophecy. They stir up our longing to enter ever more completely into the mystery of Christ: to know him better and to love him with greater fidelity.

2. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me". While Jesus applied these words to himself that day in Nazareth, they could likewise be applied, at Pentecost and thereafter, to the Body of Christ, the Church. "When the work which the Father had given the Son to do on earth (Cfr. *Io. 17,4*) was accomplished, the Holy Spirit was sent on the day of Pentecost in order that he might forever sanctify the Church, and thus all believers would have access to the Father through Christ in the one Spirit" (*Lumen Gentium, 4*). As a result, *the history of the Church* is at the same time the history of *two thousand years of the action of the Holy Spirit*, "the Lord, the Giver of Life" who renews God's people in grace and freedom, and is "the Spirit of Truth" bringing holiness and joy to people of every race and tongue and nation. This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church. The vigour and fruitfulness of the Renewal certainly attest to the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit at work in the Church in these years after the Second Vatican Council. Of course, the Spirit has guided the Church in every age, producing a great variety of gifts among the faithful. Because of the Spirit, the Church preserves a *continual*

youthful vitality. And the Charismatic Renewal is an eloquent manifestation of this vitality today, a bold statement of what "the Spirit is saying to the churches" (*Apoc. 2,7*) as we approach the close of the Second Millennium. For this reason, it is essential that you seek always to *deepen your communion with the whole Church*: with her Pastors and teachers, with her doctrine and discipline, with her sacramental life, with the entire people of God. In this same regard, I have asked Bishop Paul Cordes to assist as Episcopal Adviser to the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Office. I am sure that he will help you in fostering a dynamism that is always well-balanced and in strengthening your bonds of fidelity to the Apostolic See.

3. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me". In addition to the meaning of these words for Jesus and for the Church throughout the world they also remind us of our own *personal identity as men and women who have been baptized into Christ*. For the Spirit of the Lord is upon us, each one of us, who have been born anew in the saving waters of Baptism. And the Spirit prompts us to go forth in faith "to preach good news to the poor": the poor in material things, the poor in spiritual gifts, the poor in mind and body. The Holy Spirit gives us the courage and strength to go out to all who, in a particular way, are "the little ones" of the world. Each of us responds in a unique manner, according to our own special talents and gifts. But we shall be able to make a generous and authentic response only if we are firmly grounded in a regular habit of prayer. Accordingly, I recommend that you meditate on these words of Isaiah frequently, pondering the great mystery of how the Spirit of God over shadows your life in a manner not altogether dissimilar to the experience of the Virgin Mary. As the truth penetrates your heart and soul, it fills your whole being with gratitude and praise and a sense of awe at God's great love. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me". These words stand at the foundation of our prayer, our service to others, our life of faith. They direct us towards *the invisible God who dwells within us as in a Temple*, to the one whom we profess in the Creed to be "the Lord, the Giver of Life", the one who "has spoken through the Prophets". In prayerful reflection on these words, we meet and adore the Holy Spirit. In prayer, too, we come to see the stark reality of our own poverty, the absolute need we have for a Saviour. We discover in a more profound degree the many ways in which we ourselves are poor and needy, and thus we begin to feel an increasing solidarity with all the poor. In the end, -we realize more fully than ever before that *Good News for the poor is Good News for ourselves as well*.

4. Dear Friends in Christ, you have come to Rome in the month of May, Our Lady's month. You come just prior to the Feast of Pentecost and the beginning of the Marian Year. And in considering the theme, "Good News to the Poor", you are considering a theme dear to the Mother of our Redeemer. As I stated in my recent Encyclical on the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Life of the Church, "Mary truly proclaims the coming of the 'Messiah of the poor' (Cfr. *Is. 11,4; 61, 1*). Drawing from Mary's heart, from the depth of her faith expressed in the words of the *Magnificat*, the Church renews ever more effectively in herself the awareness that *the truth about God who saves*, the truth about God who is the source of every gift, *cannot be separated from the manifestation of his love of preference for the poor and humble*, that love which, celebrated in the *Magnificat*, is later expressed in the words and works of Jesus" (Ioannis Pauli PP. II *Redemptoris Mater*, 37). May you be inspired by the heroic example of love given by the Virgin Mother of our Redeemer, and may you entrust yourselves with confidence to her intercession and maternal care. In the love of her Son, our Saviour Christ the Lord, I impart to all

of you my Apostolic Blessing.

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