



# The Holy See

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**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS  
POPE JOHN PAUL II  
ON THE 19th ANNIVERSARY OF  
THE DEATH OF POPE PAUL VI**

*Wednesday, 6 August 1997*

Today is the anniversary of the death of my venerable Predecessor, the Servant of God Paul VI, who died on the Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord, 6 August 1978.

*"The glory of the Father shines on his face"* (response to the responsorial psalm). Today's liturgy invites us to contemplate Christ in the event of his glorious Transfiguration, so that by listening to his word we may inherit immortal life. The unforgettable Pontiff was totally dedicated to the Gospel cause. He loved Christ with all his strength and lived for the Church, which was engaged in the difficult work of the Council. He offered everything to God, especially in his last years marked by great suffering, so that she might be renewed by the power of the Spirit: "I can say that I have always loved her [the Church]", he wrote in view of his imminent death, "and I believe I have lived for her and for nothing else. But I would like the Church to know it; and that I had the strength to tell her so, as a secret which only at the very end of life one has the courage to reveal" (*Pensiero alla morte*).

Today we receive this personal message with grateful veneration. May the memory of this Pontiff spur each of us to ever more generous service to the Church and to the Gospel, which today she continues to proclaim in faithful fulfilment of Christ's command.

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