



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER JOHN PAUL II TO VARIOUS PILGRIM GROUPS

Saturday 18 November 2000

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

1. The desire to make a fruitful Jubilee pilgrimage has prompted you to pass through the Holy Door and to pause in prayer at the tombs of the Apostles. During this journey you have wished to express your affection and spiritual closeness to the Pope. I thank you for this act, and offer you a cordial welcome! You come from various Dioceses and ecclesial associations: your gathering is a great opportunity for ecclesial communion.

The Jubilee offers each one the opportunity to measure himself against Christ's demanding words and to experience God's mercy, particularly superabundant in this Jubilee Year. Indeed, it is a time of conversion and joy, which encourages believers on their journey of interior renewal so that a new mentality is developed in their hearts and in their communities, capable of closely examining world events in the light of the Gospel.

2. I now greet in particular the pilgrims from Piacenza-Bobbio, accompanied by their Bishop, by Cardinals Opilio Rossi and Luigi Poggi and by Bishop Bertagna. I thank Bishop Luciano Monari for his respectful words to me in your name. Dear brothers and sisters, today's event is part of a long journey of preparation during which your Church has reflected on her own missionary responsibility and her ability to challenge those who unfortunately, although they call themselves Christians, do not play an active part in community life. Through timely initiatives you would like to show your fraternal concern for them, inviting them to share concretely with you in the great adventure of faith. While I am pleased with your commitment, I cordially encourage you to continue to develop the humble and joyful awareness of your Christian identity. It is not only a gift which God gives you, but also a mission he entrusts to you. If you know how to trust in the power of the Spirit who acts in you, you will never fall prey to discouragement and will be able to

accomplish fully all that is asked of you.

Always have an authentically evangelical style, marked by charity and fraternal friendship. If the spirit of communion is strengthened between the Bishop and his priests and among themselves, and if priests can then create a fruitful dialogue with the laity and foster in them a constant attitude of sincere and cordial collaboration, the ecclesial journey will also become an example for civil society.

3. My thoughts now turn to you, dear faithful from Carpi, present here with your new Pastor, Bishop Elio Tinti. I am deeply grateful to him for his courteous words expressing your common sentiments. The Jubilee reminds every Christian of the duty to persevere in his vocation to be the leaven that causes the whole mass of dough to rise (cf. 1 Cor 5: 6). If you stay united round your Bishop and your priests, you will be able effectively to offer your fellow citizens the Gospel, the source of hope and new life.

May an accentuated individualism, economic well-being as an end in itself, and religious indifference that at times risks penetrating peoples' hearts be an incentive for you to live your identity with greater consistency as children of God, called to be heirs to the kingdom. May the enthusiasm and vivacity which enliven you, although you are a small flock, never wane. Continue with trust to "proclaim the Gospel to serve man".

4. I now greet you, dear pilgrims from Civitavecchia, who represent here the unity of your Diocese, gathered round your Pastor, Bishop Girolamo Grillo, to whom I express my gratitude for his cordial address. Dear faithful, live the new life you received in Baptism with enthusiasm. You know that Christ nourishes this new life above all with the gift of his Body and Blood in the divine banquet to which he calls you to be "one body" (1 Cor 10: 17).

In the Eucharist he nourishes and strengthens you, so that you can adhere ever more generously to the will of the Father. Let yourselves be guided by the grace of the Holy Spirit, source of communion; walk with joy and docility on the paths of personal conversion and the renewal of your community.

5. I now address a cordial word to you, dear faithful from Sabina-Poggio Mirteto, present here with your Pastor, Bishop Lino Fumagalli, whom I thank for the sentiments he has expressed on behalf of you all. Likewise I greet Cardinal Lucas Moreira Neves, titular of the Sabina Diocese; and Bishop emeritus Marco Caliaro. Dear friends, you have chosen the pilgrimage *ad Petri sedem* to highlight your commitment to adhere constantly to the Gospel. The solid traditions of a strong faith that is firmly rooted in the heart distinguishes your community. This is witnessed, among other things, by the popular Marian shrines of Ponticelli, Monterotondo and your cathedral, dedicated to the Virgin of Praise. I invite you to entrust all your pastoral projects to Mary.

I also encourage you to make the teachings of your fathers in the faith a heritage to preserve and expand, so that, guided by the contribution of ancient wisdom, you may know how to enter into dialogue with all the sound elements of your territory. May prayer, especially liturgical, sustain you in your efforts, so that the kingdom of Christ will be extended ever further.

6. Next I greet with affection the group of the Association "Domenico Tardini Community", guided by Cardinal Achille Silvestrini and by Archbishop Claudio Celli. The priestly soul of Cardinal Domenico Tardini had planned Villa Nazareth to enable the gifts of intellect and heart which God had given many boys to flourish, in order to make the most of them in the vocation of "apostle" at the service of the Church, for the good of their brethren.

The generations of youth have grown up and, from the great Cardinal's example and teaching, and the experience of life, the association arose with the goal of developing in its members a personal encounter with Christ, respect for the dignity of every human being, the commitment to freedom and service through culture.

Today in passing through the Holy Door, you have listened to and welcomed the voice of the Lord Jesus, who proclaims the mercy of the Father and helps each one to discover the meaning of the gratuitousness of his talents, so that he can commit himself to responding to the expectations that the kingdom of God will become a reality among men.

You can do so by cultivating an ecclesial awareness in exercising the *diakonia* of culture, that makes you feel a part of the mission entrusted to the Church, using your charisms as men and women who feel Christ's love giving birth to the demanding desire to accompany the journey of growth and maturing of young people in the faith.

7. I cordially greet the members of the Order of Sts Maurice and Lazarus who are taking part here in this audience, accompanied by Archbishop emeritus Joseph Sardou of Monaco. I wish them a happy Jubilee pilgrimage, as I cordially impart to them my Apostolic Blessing.

A special greeting goes to the Hungarian faithful, to the parish groups of St Gerard and of St Thérèse of Lisieux in Budapest. I cordially impart to all of you and to your families my Apostolic Blessing. Praised be Jesus Christ!

8. A particular greeting goes next to the faithful from various Italian parishes; to the pilgrim groups from various places; to the Community of the Friars Minor Conventual of the Sacro Convento of Assisi; to the participants in the European automobile championship "Terminillo"; to the volunteers of the National Corps for Alpine and Speleological Aid; to the Swarovski Club of Palestrina and Merate.

Dear brothers and sisters, may this visit to the tombs of the Apostles strengthen you in faith; may it

help you return to your homes with renewed determination to serve Christ and your brethren, and make you more enthusiastic missionaries of the Word of Life, who fills every heart with hope. May the intercession of the Mother of the Lord sustain you and the Blessing that I cordially impart accompany you, your communities, your families and all your loved ones.

© Copyright 2000 - Libreria Editrice Vaticana

Copyright © Dicastero per la Comunicazione - Libreria Editrice Vaticana