



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC PILGRIMAGE
OF HIS HOLINESS PAUL VI
TO WEST ASIA, OCEANIA AND AUSTRALIA

**ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER PAUL VI
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CLERGY**

*Sydney, Australia
Tuesday, 1 December 1970*

Among the many satisfactions We encounter in the course of Our journeys, one of the greatest is to be able to greet the members of the clergy, Our brothers in the priesthood. It is not Our intention to make a speech to you, but simply to speak with you in words that come straight from Our heart. As the Council says, priests fulfil «in the renewal of Christ's Church a role of the greatest importance and of ever - increasing difficulty» (*Presbyterorum ordinis*, 1). Did you not receive this particular mission of sacred service of the Gospel-the mission of proclaiming it to all nations (Cfr. *ibid.* 28: 19), and of sanctifying the People of God-as a share in the very function of the Apostles, in subordination to the order of bishops? (Cfr. *Presbyterorum ordinis*, 2) We are well aware of the zeal of the Australian clergy; We appreciate the Christian spirit which has greeted Us today and which bears witness to the faith which you have shared. We earnestly hope that in spite of the discussions which today surround the person and office of the priest, you will remain ever firm in the joy of your vocation. This joy does not have its source in material comforts or in human prestige - if such still exists-it comes rather from having a share in the special friendship of Jesus Christ (Cfr. *Io.* 15: 16).

Dear brothers, be men of God, proclaiming by your whole conduct the primacy of the supernatural, the uprightness of your faith, the whole-heartedness of your self-giving to the Lord. It is freely that you have offered your whole being to Christ so as to bring to the world the message of salvation.

You are aware that this service of the Gospel can only be understood and lived in faith, prayer,

penance and love; you know that it involves struggles and mortification and at times even misunderstanding. We urge you to hold fast with faith and generosity to all these commitments which conform you to the image of Christ the Priest (Cfr. *Letter to the Cardinal Secretary of State*, 2 February 1970; A.A.S. 1970, II, 29 February 1970).

Be also servants of all your fellowmen, without distinction of origin or rank, servants of those who are near as of those who are far, of those who search and of those who suffer; and as shining witnesses to the liberation brought by Christ accept and satisfy their longings.

Be also men of the Church. The Church cannot be separated from Jesus Christ; she is the Body of Christ. It is in the Church, with the Church and for the Church that your spiritual life will develop fully and that your ministry will be fruitful, for it is through her that the life of Christ is given to the faithful (Cfr. *Lumen gentium*, 7). Be therefore one with your bishops, not only in the observance of a hierarchical bond, but by a genuine attachment of mind and heart, as to the representative of Christ the supreme Shepherd (Cfr. *Presbyterorum ordinis*, 7).

We pray that God may grant Australia holy priests, that he may call many young men to join their numbers and that he may make their love equal to the greatness of the needs of the entire Church.

With special affection, We impart to you Our Apostolic Blessing.