



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER JOHN PAUL II TO JUBILEE PILGRIMS

Saturday, 30 September 2000

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

1. You have come to Rome to celebrate the Holy Year and to deepen your fidelity to the Gospel, while reaffirming your spiritual closeness to the Successor of Peter. I offer you my most cordial welcome!

Coming from various Dioceses, parishes, associations and groups, today you express that profound harmony of mind and heart that unites the People of God round the Redeemer of man. I hope that, during this pilgrimage to the holy memorials of the Church of Rome, you will all be strengthened in your faith and have a deep experience of grace and mercy.

2. I first extend my affectionate greeting to the faithful from the *Archdiocese of Perugia-Città della Pieve*, led by their Pastor, Archbishop Giuseppe Chiaretti. Dear friends, many of you are directly involved in parish ministry. In expressing my appreciation of your generous activity at the side of your priests, I hope that the willingness you showed during the recent diocesan Eucharistic Congress, as well as during the Pastoral Visit and the "Missions to the People", will continue in the future, so as to assure an ever effective service to your respective communities.

By virtue of your baptismal consecration, you are called to become co-responsible for the proclamation of the Gospel under the guidance of your Pastors. I therefore invite you to constant spiritual and intellectual formation, so that through you the Church's love, a reflection of God's love, will more easily reach every man and woman.

3. I now extend a cordial greeting to you, dear pilgrims from the *Diocese of Sora-Aquino-Pontecorvo*, led by your Pastor, Bishop Luca Brandolini. Today's pilgrimage concludes, in a certain

way, the Pastoral Visit that saw your Church involved in a programme of preparation for the Great Jubilee.

United in a spirit of ecclesial communion, today you reaffirm your commitment to broadening the areas of fraternal love at all levels, in order to avoid an individualism that could slow the evangelization of the entire community. Faithful to Christ and faithful to man, strive to grow, rooted in listening to the Word of God and in personal and community prayer. At the very sources of spirituality, you will thus be able to find energy and light to advance vigorously towards a more mature union with Christ.

4. I next greet *the faithful from the Diocese of Nola*, who, with Bishop Beniamino Depalma, their current Pastor, and their former Pastor, Bishop Umberto Tramma, have come here to pass through the Holy Door.

You come from places marked by the witness of St Paulinus, an inspired poet of Christ and a great saint of charity. I know that you are rediscovering his writings, in which he left spiritual and pastoral guidance that remains very timely. Use it to advantage in the renewal of your personal and community life.

Your region, like others in Campania, is facing great social challenges: from scarcity of jobs to environmental degradation. The Christian community is called to make its specific contribution to the solution of such problems, aiming at a renewed Gospel proclamation, a living experience of communion and a concrete witness of charity. I encourage the many workers to continue their generous support of the weakest and most suffering. May you be a community rich in sharing and mutual acceptance, working harmoniously so that God's gifts will shine brightly in you.

5. I now address you, *pilgrims from Nocera Inferiore*, who have come with your Pastor, Bishop Gioacchino Illiano. I greet you with affection. May the Jubilee you have come to celebrate strengthen you in your intention to continue resolutely on the path of the new evangelization which you undertook several years ago.

As I urged you during my visit to your Diocese in 1990, work for "a missionary proclamation which will profoundly renew popular piety; a catechesis which will meet the challenges of the prevailing culture; a liturgy that is not detached from life; a pastoral presence that reaches every social group; a commitment to human advancement which is concrete and incisive".

6. I would now like to greet with affection *the faithful from the Diocese of Acerra*, accompanied by Bishop Giovanni Rinaldi.

Dear friends, I invite you to persevere in prayer, so that Christ will visit your Church in depth. With the help of divine grace, may she grow in fraternal communion, in the co-responsibility of all for

evangelization and in Christian witness to the social problems of your region. Generously put the charisms you have received at the disposal of the Christian community and invoke the "Lord of the harvest", so that he will send many generous priestly and religious vocations.

7. I extend a cordial welcome to the English-speaking pilgrims, and to the parish groups and associations making a Jubilee pilgrimage to Rome. In particular I greet the groups from the Archdioceses of Newark and Kansas City, and the members of the Italo-Australian pilgrimage. The month of October, which begins tomorrow, is traditionally the month of the Holy Rosary, one of the best and most efficacious Christian prayers, especially when recited together in the family. I wish to recommend this way of honouring Mary and asking her intercession. May God bless you all abundantly, and may his peace be with you and your loved ones.

8. Dear Portuguese-speaking brothers and sisters, especially the Immaculate Conception Group from Rio de Janeiro, I hope that your pilgrimage to the tomb of Peter will leave in your hearts effective signs of justice and charity. In the Jubilee programme you have an opportunity to receive the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation; to be nourished at the banquet of the Eucharist; to visit the memorial of the Apostles. May these be moments of intense communion with God. When you return to Brazil, you will thus be strengthened in faith, in the resolution to do good and in charity in your state of life and the commitment to which God calls you.

9. My thoughts turn, finally, to the groups of faithful who come from various Italian parishes, to the Catania section of the Italian Union of the Blind, to the managers and workers of the Carsten's Company of Sant'Agata Irpina di Solofra, to the ushers of the Senate Building on the Capitoline Hill, to the Solidarity Centre of Arezzo and to Our Lady of the Annunciation Hospital Company in Taranto. May Christ, the Holy Door who leads us to the Father, always be the centre of your lives, so that you can be convinced and joyful witnesses to his mercy.

With these hopes I invoke the intercession of Mary, Mother of the Church, and cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing to all.