



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER PAUL VI
TO THE BISHOPS FROM WALES
ON THEIR «AD LIMINA» VISIT***

Wednesday, 7 September 1977

Venerable Brothers,

It indeed a pleasure for us to welcome you today on your Visit “ad limina Apostolorum” from the Church in Wales. We greet you as the Pastors entrusted by the Holy Spirit with the task of tending the flock in a region that has known great growth in Catholic life, though the Catholic presence is still small.

The country which you represent has a long and venerable Christian history, its origins stretching back even to the second century, as we are told by Tertullian and Origen. And how many illustrious names grace the pages of early Welsh ecclesiastical history: in addition to the flourishing monastic life of those times, we read of Saint David, Patron of Wales, Saint Asaph, Saint Teilo. To these we must add all those holy men and women whom we now know through the placenames commemorating ancient churches dedicated to them.

The Christian faith burned bright in Wales also in later, troubled times. Fidelity to the See of Peter is witnessed to by, among others, Saint Richard Gwyn and Saint David Lewis, members of the group of Forty Martyrs of England and Wales canonized by us six years ago.

The Welsh presence in Rome is not something transient; so many priests have been trained in this City for service in Wales, a training which they received at the English and Welsh College - a monument to the continued links between the Principality of Wales and the See of Rome through four hundred years.

We are happy to know of the vitality of the Church in your land at the present time: the trusting relationships between clergy and faithful; the progress in Catholic education; the recent increase in

vocations to the priesthood; the growth of prayer-groups. All these things are evidence of a lively faith.

In addition, we are pleased that one of the fruits of the Second Vatican Council has been the fact that the ancient and noble Welsh language is now used in the liturgy, and we express the hope that this will steadily become more widely possible.

Wales is a land famed for song. May the hearts of those whom you serve be ever filled with hymns of praise to God; may the Catholics of Wales be examples of upright living, fervent faith and ardent hope. May the green valleys of your beautiful land be rendered ever more radiant by the lives of their inhabitants.

As we send to our beloved sons and daughters in Wales the assurance of a special place in our prayers, to them and to yourselves, Venerable Brothers, we cordially impart our Apostolic Blessing.