



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE RELIGIOUS AND A GROUP OF FAITHFUL
FROM ERNAKULAM (INDIA)**

Tuesday, 14 November 1978

Dearly beloved in Christ,

LATER ON THIS MONTH, Cardinal Joseph Parecattil will commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of his Episcopal Ordination, and it is a pleasure for me to celebrate this event by receiving a group of the faithful of Ernakulam.

Your presence here is in fact a representation of the entire Archdiocese clergy, religious and laity gathered around your Archbishop, united in the communion of faith and love with the universal Church, under Jesus Christ the "chief Shepherd". The sublime mystery of the local Church is enacted here in all its beauty, and the Bishop of Rome finds joy in your presence and immense spiritual support in the filial love that you show to him as Successor of Peter

My earnest hope is that your visit to this See of Peter and the renewal of your act of faith at his tomb in the Basilica will have a lasting meaning for the rest of your lives. The whole fabric of the Church is linked to Peter's profession of the divinity of the Lord Jesus: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God". Our entire ecclesiology draws meaning from this great reality; our vocation as Christians is to proclaim by due authenticity of our lives what we accept by faith.

A bishop is called in a particular way to give testimony to faith in Jesus Christ, true God and true man, Son of God and Son Mary. Cardinal Parecattil has done this for a quarter of a century and I wish today, in the presence of all of you, to render honour to him and to the Episcopacy, which is God's great gift for ensuring that the faith of his Church will be transmitted, sustained and nurtured.

My greeting goes back with the Cardinal and all of you to Ernakulam. In the love of the Saviour I embrace all the members of the ecclesial community, especially those who are suffering or afflicted in any way. I assure you that the Church is grateful for the priestly and religious vocations that have arisen in your midst, and for all the fruits of justice and holiness that you have shown in Christian living.

Fortified by God's grace and heeding the exhortation of the Scriptures. " Let us not lose sight of Jesus, who leads us in

our faith and brings it to perfection" This is my prayer for Ernakulam on this joyful occasion and always. With my Apostolic Blessing.

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