



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER JOHN PAUL II
TO JUBILEE PILGRIMS FROM ITALY, MEXICO,
SWITZERLAND, GERMANY AND THE USA***

Saturday, 11 November 2000

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

1. I extend a cordial welcome to each of you, who have come to Rome to renew your profession of faith at the tombs of the Apostles on the occasion of the Great Jubilee. You come from different Dioceses and have gathered all together round the Successor of Peter, expressing in this way your common love for Christ and his Church. This experience, with its various celebrations, will certainly help you to strengthen your personal fidelity to the Gospel and be a precious opportunity for conversion, so that you can live with renewed zeal the apostolic mission to which you are called through Baptism. I welcome you with affection and spiritually embrace each of you.

2. I first greet the many pilgrims from the Archdiocese of Messina-Lipari-Santa Lucia del Mela, accompanied by their Pastor, Archbishop Giovanni Marra. Thank you, venerable Brother, for the courteous words you addressed to me, expressing the sentiments of the faithful and, in particular, of Archbishop emeritus Ignazio Cannavò and Auxiliary Bishop Francesco Montenegro. Dear brothers and sisters, even in the diversity of its geographical, historical and cultural situations, your diocesan community has a solid spiritual patrimony, rooted in faith in Christ. Draw constantly from this wonderful source and find in it the necessary courage and strength to tackle confidently the challenges of today's society.

In this Holy Year you have felt the need to reach out to the distant and, in doing your utmost for a new "sowing of the Gospel", you have rediscovered the urgency of the missionary mandate. In this light the "diocesan mission", well-integrated into the Great Jubilee, becomes highly significant. It has attracted remarkable interest, thanks to the relentless dedication of the priests and many pastoral workers, emphasizing the urgent need for each person to let himself be evangelized first and then, in turn, to bring Christ's joyous message to others.

Continue without stopping on this path, which is that of the new evangelization, encouraged by the spiritual resources and vitality of your Christian communities. Look ahead to the third millennium and offer the liberating joy of the Gospel to all. Be attentive to the needs of families and young people, providing them with fruitful opportunities for religious

formation. Seek out the poor and the suffering, and let them experience the tenderness of God, the heavenly Father of every human creature.

3. I now greet you, dear pilgrims from the Archdiocese of Turin, who, through the words of your Archbishop, Severino Poletto, to whom I am grateful, have expressed your sentiments of devout affection. For you too, the Jubilee Year highlights in a special way the need to bear witness to the Gospel of charity. This moreover is part of your city's tradition. How can we forget, in fact, Turin's many saints who distinguished themselves in the heroic exercise of this first and most important Christian virtue? Today, the lives of these fellow-citizens, who are well known to you, are still an excellent example to follow. From among the many, today I would like to recall St Callistus Caravario, a martyr in China and native of your land, whom I had the joy of canonizing last month.

He combined his missionary zeal with service to the poor, thus becoming an example to your diocesan community involved in a great missionary effort.

I also think back with deep emotion to my visit to Turin and my meditation before the Holy Shroud, which during the Holy Year has again been exposed for the devotion of the faithful. In this mysterious mirror of the Gospel, each individual can discover the meaning of his own suffering as a participation in the suffering of Christ, the source of salvation for all humanity. Furthermore, I must recall at this meeting the communities in your Archdiocese stricken by the recent floods. To the sorely tried people of your region and the neighbouring Valle d'Aosta, I express again my special closeness and my constant remembrance in prayer, as I hope that everyone will be able to resume a normal family and social life as soon as possible.

4. I now greet you, dear faithful from the Archdiocese of Trent, accompanied by your Pastor, Archbishop Luigi Bressan. I cordially thank him for his devoted words on your behalf. This year you are celebrating the 16th centenary of the death of your archdiocesan patron, St Vigilus, a great evangelizer of your region. Always jealously cherish the gift of faith which you received many centuries ago: it is a precious inheritance that you are called to transmit faithfully. Return to it constantly, since the Gospel sources are an unfailing well-spring of human and religious renewal.

Open your hearts to Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life. Today, as in the past, he challenges consciences and asks each person to make room in his soul for his word. Welcome it as your parents welcomed it, and walk enthusiastically on the paths of solidarity and love. In fact, if faith is to be lived completely, it requires consistent Christian action in the various circumstances where human life unfolds. Aware of Trent's fruitful tradition of solidarity and voluntary service, rekindle your commitment to the various works and activities of human advancement. Your whole community will thus be a school of faith and active, concrete love.

5. I also extend a cordial greeting to the group of pilgrims connected with Blessed Trinity Shrine in Vallepiera. They come from various Dioceses and are accompanied by Bishop Francesco Lambiasi of Anagni-Alatri, whom I thank for his kind words. Dear friends, faithful to the Jubilee spirit, may you be attentive and willing listeners to God's word, growing in fidelity to Christ and to his message of salvation. Thus you will be equal to the mission that was entrusted to you with Baptism.

I greet the participants at the international congress organized by the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, together with the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, on the theme of the timeliness of Mother Cabrini's message for emigration. Dear friends, today, too, large numbers of individuals and families leave their lands in search of safer and more dignified living conditions elsewhere. In these days you are giving your attention to these emigrants.

May the witness and message of Mother Frances Cabrini, the bold and generous apostle of migrants, always illumine all your activities and projects for migrants, guiding you to develop a sincere dialogue with them which respects the dignity of the person.

6. I affectionately greet the Spanish-speaking pilgrims, especially the group from the Omnilife Company, accompanied by Cardinal Juan Sandoval Íñiguez, Archbishop of Guadalajara. May your pilgrimage be a true interior journey, a fitting time for conversion, in order to welcome into your hearts in a new way Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God, who reveals to us the Father's merciful face. And may his Spirit dwell in you for ever. In this Holy Year, I invite you to pass on the joy of your Jubilee pilgrimage to your families and parish communities.

I offer a cordial welcome to the English-speaking visitors, and especially to the Jubilee pilgrimage group from the Diocese of Venice in Florida. As you pass through the Holy Door may you experience a profound spiritual renewal and enter more fully into the mystery of grace which the Lord has entrusted to his Church. Upon you and your families I invoke joy and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ.

I cordially greet the Yodel Club from Riederalp in Switzerland. May your music and song fill many people with joy. I also greet the Neo-Catechumenal groups from Berlin, Hamburg and Munich. They have come on pilgrimage with their pastors to the tomb of Peter in order to strengthen the apostolic roots of their faith.

May passing through the Holy Door give you the strength to bear witness to the faith in your homeland on the threshold of the third millennium. For this I give you all my Apostolic Blessing.

7. Lastly, an affectionate greeting to the parish communities, associations and other groups of pilgrims, especially the Confederation of Italians in the World and the Little Singers of Torrespaccata. I hope that everyone will return home encouraged by this Jubilee experience and reinvigorated by the desire to follow the Gospel and bear witness to it courageously.

Invoking the protection of Mary, Mother of Jesus and our Mother, I cordially impart a special Apostolic Blessing to everyone.

