



The Holy See

TESTAMENT OF THE HOLY FATHER

JOHN PAUL II

Totus Tuus ego sum

In the Name of the Most Holy Trinity. Amen.

"Watch, therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming" (Mt 24: 42) - these words remind me of the last call that will come at whatever time the Lord desires. I want to follow Him and I want all that is part of my earthly life to prepare me for this moment. I do not know when it will come but I place this moment, like all other things, in the hands of the Mother of my Master: *Totus Tuus*. In these same motherly hands I leave everything and Everyone with whom my life and my vocation have brought me into contact. In these Hands I above all leave the Church, and also my Nation and all humankind. I thank everyone. I ask forgiveness of everyone. I also ask for prayers, so that God's Mercy may prove greater than my own weakness and unworthiness.

During the spiritual exercises I reread the Testament of the Holy Father Paul VI. It was reading it that gave me the incentive to write this Testament.

I leave no possessions of which it will be necessary to dispose. As for the things I use every day, I ask that they be distributed as seems appropriate. Let my personal notes be burned. I ask that Fr Stanisław see to this, and I thank him for his help and collaboration, so understanding for so many years. On the other hand, I leave all my other "thank yous" in my heart before God Himself, because it is difficult to express them.

With regard to my funeral, I repeat the instructions that were given by the Holy Father Paul VI (*here a note in the margin says: burial in the ground and not in a sarcophagus, 13 March 1992*). Let the College of Cardinals and my Fellow Citizens decide on the place.

*"apud Dominum misericordia
et copiosa apud Eum redemptio"*

John Paul PP. II

Rome, 6 March 1979

After my death I ask for Holy Masses and prayers

5 February 1990

Undated page

I express the most profound trust that, in spite of all my weakness, the Lord will grant me every grace necessary to face, in accordance with His will, any task, test or suffering that He sees fit to ask of His servant during his life. I am also confident that He will never let me fail through some attitude I may have: words, deeds or omissions, in my obligations to this holy Petrine See.

24 February to 1 March 1980

Also during these spiritual exercises I reflected on the truth of the Priesthood of Christ in the perspective of that Passing which the moment of death is for each one of us. The Resurrection of Christ is an eloquent [*above this word was added* decisive] sign of the departure from this world for rebirth in the other, future world.

I therefore read the draft of my Testament as it was recorded last year, also written during the spiritual exercises - I compared it with the Testament of my great Predecessor and Father, Paul VI, with his sublime testimony on the death of a Christian and a Pope - and I reminded myself of the matters mentioned in the draft of 6 March 1979, prepared by me (in a somewhat makeshift manner).

Today, I would like to add just this: that everyone keep the prospect of death in mind and be ready to go before the Lord and Judge - and at the same time Redeemer and Father. So I keep this continuously in my mind, entrusting that decisive moment to the Mother of Christ and of the Church - to the Mother of my hope.

The times we are living in are unspeakably difficult and disturbing. The Church's journey has also become difficult and stressful, a characteristic proof of these times - both for the Faithful and for Pastors. In some Countries (as, for example, those I read about during the spiritual exercises), the Church finds herself in a period of persecution no less evil than the persecutions of the early

centuries, indeed worse, because of the degree of ruthlessness and hatred. *Sanguis martyrum - semen christianorum* ["The blood of martyrs is the seed of Christians" (Tertullian)]. And in addition to this, so many innocent people disappear, even in this Country in which we live....

I would like once again to entrust myself entirely to the Lord's grace. He Himself will decide when and how I am to end my earthly life and my pastoral ministry. In life and in death [I am] *Totus Tuus* through Mary Immaculate. I hope, in already accepting my death now, that Christ will give me the grace I need for the final passover, that is, [my] Pasch. I also hope that He will make it benefit the important cause I seek to serve: the salvation of men and women, the preservation of the human family and, within in it, all the nations and peoples (among them, I also specifically address my earthly Homeland), useful for the people that He has specially entrusted to me, for the matter of the Church and for the glory of God Himself.

I do not want to add anything to what I wrote a year ago - except to express this readiness and, at the same time, this trust which these spiritual exercises have once again inspired in me.

John Paul II

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5 March 1982

Totus Tuus ego sum

In the course of the spiritual exercises this year I read (several times) the text of my Testament of 6 March 1979. Although I still consider it as temporary (not definitive) I am leaving it in its present form. I am not (for the moment) changing anything, nor do I add anything to the arrangements it contains.

The attack on my life on 13 May 1981 in some way confirmed the exactness of the words I wrote during the spiritual exercises in 1980 (24 February-1 March).

I feel so much more deeply that I am totally in God's Hands - and I remain continuously available to my Lord, entrusting myself to Him through His Immaculate Mother (*Totus Tuus*).

John Paul PP. II

Postscript

In connection with the last sentence of my Testament of 6 March 1979 ("Let the College of

Cardinals and my Fellow Citizens decide on the place/that is, the place of the funeral") - I explain that I have in mind: the Metropolitan of Krakow or the General Council of the Polish Bishops' Conference - in the meantime, I ask the College of Cardinals to do their best to satisfy the possible requests of those listed above.

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1 March 1985

Once again - with regard to the expression "the College of Cardinals and my Fellow Citizens": the "College of Cardinals" is under no obligation to consult "my Fellow Citizens" on this topic; it may, however, do so, if for some reason it should deem it appropriate.

JPII

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The spiritual exercises in the Jubilee Year 2000
(12-18 March)
[for the Testament]

1. When, on 16 October 1978, the Conclave of Cardinals chose John Paul II, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, the Primate of Poland, said to me: "*The task of the new Pope will be to lead the Church into the Third Millennium*". I do not know if I am repeating the sentence exactly as he said it, but this was at least the sense of what I heard him say at the time. These words were spoken by the Man who went down in history as the Primate of the Millennium: a great Primate. I witnessed his mission, his total confidence, his struggles and his triumph. "When victory is won, it will be a victory through Mary": The Primate of the Millennium was fond of repeating these words of his Predecessor, Cardinal August Hlond.

Thus, I was in some way prepared for the task presented to me on that day, 16 October 1978. As I write these words, *the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000* is already a reality that is taking place. On the night of 24 December 1999 the symbolic Great Jubilee Door in the Basilica of St Peter was opened, and subsequently that of St John Lateran, then that of St Mary Major - on New Year's Day, and on 19 January the Door of the Basilica of St Paul "Outside-the-Walls". Particularly the latter event, because of its ecumenical character, was imprinted indelibly on memories.

2. As the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000 continues, the 20th century closes behind us and the 21st century unfolds, from one day to the next. In accordance with the designs of Providence, I have been granted to live in the difficult century that is retreating into the past, and now in the year in which I have reached my 80s ("*octogesima adveniens*"), I must ask myself *whether the time has*

come to say with Simeon of the Bible, "*Nunc dimittis*".

On 13 May 1981, the day of the attack on the Pope during the General Audience in St Peter's Square, Divine Providence miraculously saved me from death. He Himself, who is the One Lord of life and death, extended this life of mine, and in a certain way he restored it to me. Ever since that moment it has belonged even more to Him. I hope He will help me to recognize how long I must continue this service to which he called me on 16 October 1978. I ask him to deign to call me to Himself whenever he wishes. "If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then... we are the Lord's" (cf. Rom 14: 8). I hope that as long as I am granted to carry out the Petrine service in the Church, God in His Mercy will grant me the necessary strength for this service.

3. As I do every year during the spiritual exercises, I read the Testament that I wrote on 6 March 1979. I continue to keep the instructions it contains. What was added then, and also during the subsequent spiritual retreats, reflects the difficult and tense general situation that marked the 1980s. After autumn of the year 1989, this situation changed. The final decade of the last century was free of the previous tensions; this does not mean that it did not bring new problems and difficulties. In a special way *may Divine Providence be praised for this*, that the period known as the "Cold War" ended *without violent nuclear conflict*; the risk of it had been threatening the world in the previous period.

4. As I stand on the threshold of the Third Millennium "*in medio Ecclesiae*", I would like once again to express my *gratitude to the Holy Spirit for the great gift of the Second Vatican Council*, to which, together with the whole Church - and especially with the whole Episcopate - I feel indebted. I am convinced that it will long be granted to the new generations to draw from the treasures that this 20th-century Council has lavished upon us. As a Bishop who took part in the Council from the first to the last day, I desire to entrust this great patrimony to all who are and will be called in the future to put it into practice. For my part, I thank the eternal Pastor who has enabled me to serve this very great cause in the course of all the years of my Pontificate.

"*In medio Ecclesiae*"... from the very first years of my service as a Bishop - precisely, thanks to the Council - I was granted to *experience the fraternal communion of the Episcopate*. As a priest of the Archdiocese of Krakow, I was granted to experience the fraternal communion of the presbyterate - the Council had opened a new dimension of this experience.

5. *How many people* I would have to list! The Lord God has probably called the majority of them to Himself - as for those who are still here, may the words of this Testament recall them, everyone and everywhere, wherever they may happen to be.

In the course of the more than 20 years since I have been carrying out the Petrine service "*in medio Ecclesiae*", *I have experienced the benevolent and most especially the fruitful collaboration*

of so many Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops, so many priests and so many consecrated persons - Brothers and Sisters - finally, of a great many lay people, in the Curial environment and in the Vicariate of the Diocese of Rome as well as outside these contexts.

How could I not embrace with grateful memories all the Episcopal Conferences in the world, which I met in the course of their visits *ad limina Apostolorum!* Besides, how could I fail to remember all the Christian Brothers and Sisters - non-Catholics! And the Rabbi of Rome and likewise all the representatives of non-Christian religions, not to mention all the representatives of the worlds of culture, science, politics and the media!

6. As the end of my earthly life draws close, I think back to its beginning, to my Parents, my Brother and my Sister (whom I never knew, for she died before I was born), to the Parish of Wadowice where I was baptized, to that city of my youth, to my peers, my companions of both sexes at elementary school, at high school, at university, until the time of the Occupation when I worked as a labourer, and later, to the Parish in Niegowic, to St Florian's Parish in Krakow, to the pastoral work of academics, to the context... to all the contexts... to Krakow and to Rome... to the persons who were especially entrusted to me by the Lord.

I want to say just one thing to them all: "May God reward you!".

"In manus Tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum".

17 March 2000, A.D.