



The Holy See

**LETTER OF THE HOLY FATHER
JOHN PAUL II
TO THE NATIONAL EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS OF PERU**

To my Beloved Sons and Daughters of Peru,

1. At the end of the National Eucharistic Congress, I would like to send a cordial greeting to everyone who has had an intense experience of Christ's constant presence among his disciples.

During these days you have delved deeply into this wonderful mystery by which the Church lives, and have reflected on its inexhaustible riches for the vocation and holiness of every Christian, for the growth in fraternal communion and solidarity of Ecclesial Communities and for the evangelization of all the sectors of personal and social life.

I wanted to make my closeness and spiritual participation in this important event clearly visible through my Special Envoy, Cardinal Bernard Francis Law. I was prompted to do so not only by my special affection for the sons and daughters of Peru, but also by the certainty that sincere closeness to the Eucharist will be the strongest support for a renewed encouragement to faith in this country and for its vigorous rebirth at a time when there are many problems that can weaken its vitality.

2. As the theme of the Congress says, Jesus Christ, the only Saviour of the world, is food for a new life. A life that is born of intimacy with God and which reaches humanity through the sacrifice of Jesus, who will be with us "always, to the close of the age" (*Mt 28: 20*), especially in the Eucharist.

The Christian community gathers around it to renew Christ's sacrifice sacramentally and thus, by the efficacy of grace, to fill all the members of his Mystical Body with dynamism. In the Eucharist, moreover, it continually learns the secret of the true life which never fades or is extinguished, since it is God's: it is the life which Christ gave freely for the salvation of all, without anyone taking it

from him (cf. *Jn* 10: 18), the life he could sacrifice so that it might yield abundant fruits (cf. *Jn* 12: 24).

In celebrating the Eucharist, the Christian community therefore joins liturgy and charity, the commemoration of Christ's sacrifice and the commitment to imitate his boundless love. We who "know that we have passed from death into life, because we love the brethren" (1 *Jn* 3: 14), will encounter in the Eucharistic Jesus the "spring of water welling up to eternal life" (*Jn* 4: 14), the generosity to share our possessions with others, the strength to bring the Gospel to every corner of the earth and the perseverance necessary to build the civilization of love day by day, despite the difficulties.

3. I implore Our Lady of Evangelization that this National Eucharistic Congress may produce abundant fruits of spiritual, ecclesial and social renewal and bring the seed of new life to all Peruvian society through the witness and evangelizing action of the Pastors and faithful, families, groups and ecclesial organizations, who have been enlivened by the Body and Blood of Christ.

May you, who in these days have experienced an intense and joyful encounter with Christ in an atmosphere of deep ecclesial communion, take it back to your towns and cities, your parishes and your families, together with the Apostolic Blessing which I cordially impart to you.

From Castel Gandolfo, 8 August 2000.

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