



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO PILGRIMS FROM VARIOUS ITALIAN DIOCESES
AND OTHER NATIONS OF THE WORLD**

Saturday, 28 October 2000

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

1. I extend a cordial welcome to all of you who have come from various parts of Italy for the Jubilee. May you draw from this grace-filled visit the strength and courage to follow the Gospel faithfully and become authentic servants of Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life. I sincerely thank Cardinal Camillo Ruini, who spoke on behalf of the many Bishops present here this morning, expressing their sentiments, as well as those of their faithful gathered here and of the thousands of students who are participating in the celebration organized by the FIDAE.

First of all, I affectionately greet the diocesan pilgrims from the Basilicata region who are accompanied by their respective Bishops, Ennio Appignanesi, Antonio Ciliberti, Michele Scandiffio, Rocco Talucci, Vincenzo Cozzi and Salvatore Ligorio. To each of them I express my fraternal affection. Dear faithful, you wished to participate with one voice in the Jubilee celebration in Rome and have included the provincial and municipal institutions and, particularly, your region. I know that the region has generously contributed to welcoming pilgrims and supported important religious-cultural and missionary projects connected with the Jubilee events. May this Jubilee pilgrimage be an occasion of personal encounter with Christ for everyone. Open yourselves with trust to him, the only Saviour of the world, and you will receive true joy. Listen to him, follow him: he calls you to be a living member of his Church, shining temples of his Spirit of Love.

2. I next greet the pilgrims from the Archdiocese of Siena-Colle di Val d'Elsa-Montalcino, accompanied by Archbishop Gaetano Bonicelli. Dear friends, today your Jubilee pilgrimage to the tomb of the Apostles is, in a certain sense, guided by the figure and example of St Catherine, co-patroness of Italy and of Europe, whose marble image shines today on the exterior of the Vatican

Basilica, as if to signify her intense devotion to Peter and his Successors. Follow the spiritual journey of this great woman from your land, whose life was a progressive growth in the knowledge of Christ and in devotion to him. May her witness help you to continue fulfilling, day after day, your Christian vocation and to respond to it with generous commitment.

3. I am also pleased to extend a cordial greeting to the faithful from the Archdiocese of Fermo, gathered around their Archbishop Gennaro Franceschetti. In this last period of the Jubilee, an intense time of the Father's merciful love, I sincerely hope that each of you will be further motivated by apostolic zeal and will spread the Gospel message by your example. I encourage you to find in prayer, especially in the Eucharistic celebration, the strength to participate actively in the life of your Christian communities. Every disciple of the Lord is called to fulfil his role in building the Church.

4. My thoughts turn now to the faithful from the Archdiocese of Amalfi-Cava de' Tirreni, gathered here under the guidance of Archbishop Orazio Soricelli. The path of this Jubilee Year saw you involved in a significant pastoral journey full of apostolic initiatives. Dear friends, do not waste the abundant spiritual fruits you have gained, but try to take part actively and responsibly in the evangelizing mission of the Church. Welcome the demanding and liberating message of the Gospel and make the Good News heard constantly by your words, but above all by your own witness of life.

5. I now address a special word of greeting to the pilgrims from the Diocese of Rimini, accompanied by their Bishop Mariano De Nicolò. Remembering with pleasure my [Pastoral Visit in 1982](#), which concluded with the Holy Mass that I celebrated on the great esplanade at the harbour, I renew my invitation to you to meditate on the responsibilities stemming from the tourist vocation of your diocesan territory. Commit yourselves to giving a soul to tourism, never tire of offering the Christian message to everyone and of defending the great values of life, the family and the sacredness of the Lord's Day.

6. I now turn to you, dear faithful from the Diocese of Tivoli, gathered here with your Bishop Pietro Garlato. I know that you are preparing for a special diocesan mission. This programme, which is taking place almost at the end of the celebrations of the Great Jubilee, is a significant occasion to bring to fruition the gifts of grace derived from the Jubilee events that have followed one another during the year. May each believer be a courageous evangelizer wherever he lives.

7. My thoughts now turn to the faithful from the Diocese of Latina-Terracina-Sezze-Priverno and to their Bishop Giuseppe Petrocchi. Dear friends, I still remember with pleasure my visit to your land in 1991, on the occasion of the centenary of the birth of St Maria Goretti, patroness of the entire Pontine area. The example of her fidelity to Christ in the constant exercise of Christian virtues is still valid and timely, even in the third millennium. May you imitate her consistency and courage in your daily decisions, while offering a sincere response to the common call to holiness.

8. I likewise greet the educational institutions which have come from many parts of Italy, especially the numerous participants in the traditional meeting of the Catholic schools of Rome and Lazio. Welcome, dear students, teachers and parents. A year has passed since the great demonstration of 30 October 1999, in which a large group representing Italian Catholic schools gathered in this square. In this connection I cannot fail to remember the chief organizer of that event, Bro. Giuseppe Lazzaro, who died prematurely. In recalling his generous and fervent work in the educational world as president of Lazio's FIDAE and his commitment to supporting Catholic school parity, I offer a special prayer to the Lord for his blessed soul.

Schools, especially Catholic schools, which are a crossroads of the problems affecting the social and cultural life of the country, must take responsibility for the questions, uncertainties, but also for the positive energy and aspirations that stir young people. It is your task, dear educational leaders in general and those of Catholic schools in particular, to offer them sound, authentic cultural and formative reference-points, helping them always to be disciples of the Truth. With the wish that Catholic schools will have their rightful place fully recognized in the nation's social and civil life, I hope that you may all continue to work in education and formation with persevering trust, skill and renewed confidence.

9. I cordially greet the members of the *World Brotherhood of Gastronomy, La Chaîne des Rôtisseurs*. May your meeting in Rome be an opportunity to strengthen your bonds of friendship and solidarity, and to observe the Jubilee with all the pilgrims! With my Apostolic Blessing.

I would also like to extend a cordial greeting to the Spanish-speaking pilgrims who have come to participate in this Jubilee celebration. I encourage you to continue growing in your faith and always to be witnesses to God's merciful love revealed in the crucified and risen Christ. May God grant you the graces of this Jubilee.

10. Lastly, an affectionate greeting goes to the various parish communities, to the associations and to the other groups of pilgrims, in particular to the representatives of INA-Assitalia and to the College of Industrial Experts. I hope that today's Jubilee experience will be for each of you an effective incentive to charity, justice and peace, so that you can contribute to the renewal in Christ of Christian communities and every area of life.

Invoking the maternal intercession of Mary, Mother of the Church, I sincerely impart my Apostolic Blessing to all present.