



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE EDITORIAL STAFF AND READERSHIP
OF THE LIBORIUSBLATT,
A CATHOLIC WEEKLY PUBLISHED IN PADERBORN (GERMANY)**

Thursday, 11 March 1999

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

1. I am pleased to welcome you to the Apostolic Palace. Both the editorial staff and many readers have come together on pilgrimage to Rome to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the *Liboriusblatt*.

When I see you gathered here before me, I am reminded of a large family. Today I think this comparison is particularly apt, since your publication sees itself precisely as a family paper. This is true not only of the topics that it covers, but also of your paper as a whole: whether writers or readers, whether producers or consumers - together you form in a way the *Liboriusblatt* family. I gladly take this opportunity to offer you my heartfelt congratulations on your 100-year family tradition. In a sometimes difficult age, you have succeeded in preserving and sharpening the Catholic identity of your paper. You have thus held an important place on the 20th-century press scene.

2. The grateful look at the past which characterizes a family gathering should not alter our view of the future. The contemporary horizon is marked by technological integration and globalization. In a matter of seconds the latest news flashes around the world. Information, which a short while ago reached only limited areas, now spreads across continents like wildfire. Unfortunately, a loss of quality is often the price of quantity. "Public opinion" is frequently moulded more by presentation and sensationalism than by news content. Sometimes it seems that the substance of a report is sacrificed to its market value as a commodity.

This is not only the fault of information producers and suppliers. Readers, viewers and listeners who make their own free, personal decisions about the media also bear a particular responsibility. Choosing what is really valuable and worth knowing is more difficult than ever. As readers of the *Liboriusblatt*, you have made a good choice. Your loyalty imposes an obligation on all who are

responsible for publishing the paper. What the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council stated in this regard has lost none of its urgency: "If one really wants to form readers in a thoroughly Christian spirit, a Catholic press truly worthy of the name ought to be "supported" (*Inter mirifica*, n. 14).

3. Dear brothers and sisters, the *Liboriusblatt* is truly worthy of the name and for this I express my appreciation. God be with your paper also as you cross the threshold of the third millennium. The diverse world of the press with its variety of opinions really calls for a Catholic voice. May it also be heard in the *Liboriusblatt*! With this wish I gladly give you my Apostolic Blessing.