



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
TO THE PILGRIMS WHO HAD COME TO ROME
FOR THE BEATIFICATION OF NEW BLESSEDS**

Monday, 4 October 1999

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

1. Yesterday's solemn celebration is in a certain sense continued in our meeting today, at which we would like to renew our song of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord for the new blessed, whom the Church holds up to us as examples to imitate. With great affection I greet each of you who have come in such numbers to pay homage to these faithful witnesses of the Gospel.

In contemplating *Fr Ferdinand Mary Baccilieri*, a humble and zealous priest, I extend a cordial greeting to the Sisters Servants of Mary of Galeazza, who venerate him as their founder and feel committed to keep his spirit alive and active in their Institute's work.

May the spiritual daughters of this new Blessed and all who invoke him as their protector welcome his invitation to reflect constantly on the Christian message and to foster a tender devotion to Our Lady of Sorrows. It is important to understand that following Christ necessarily involves that serious revision of one's life to which he exhorted everyone, especially on the occasion of the parish missions. May the desire to offer each one the clear teaching of the Gospel grow in those who, in following his example, continue his apostolic action to reach families and individual faithful.

2. I cordially greet the brothers and sisters who have come for the beatification of *Fr Edward Poppe*, especially those from Belgium. The Church is happy to consider him a new blessed. I encourage you to take him, a witness of faith and charity, as your model and guide. In prayer and in the Eucharist he found the strength for his daily life and for his pastoral mission. By loving Christ totally, he dedicated himself to imitating him in all things, in doing the will of our heavenly Father and in welcoming all people. In his intimate relationship with the Lord of the harvest, *Fr Poppe* offered the world to God

so that he could offer God to the world.

Fr Poppe made his own the motto and desire for poverty and humility of Bl. Antoine Chevrier: "My life is Jesus Christ". This, in fact, is the ideal of every priest and of every Christian, because a life lived with love for the Lord and, in his love, is a life that finds its true and complete fulfilment. I invite families, in particular, to help young people to listen for God's call to follow him in the priesthood with generosity. Indeed, it is in the family that vocations can be born, through the transmission of faith and moral values.

3. "Do we want to go to heaven? Courage: prayer is the ladder to reach it". With Bl. *Arcangelo Tadini's* very timely exhortation I wish to greet the Worker Sisters of the Holy House of Nazareth, together with the pilgrims from the Diocese of Brescia and all who today rejoice in the beatification of this generous and fearless shepherd of the People of God.

He felt deeply responsible for the persons entrusted to him and left nothing untried to protect them from every sort of danger. Bl. Tadini knew how to combine daring pastoral initiatives with intense and constant prayer and effective popular preaching. From his resourceful mind emerged innovative ecclesial and social projects to respond to the "signs of the times": the spinning factory to provide work for the young women of the parish, the hostel for local working girls, as well as the Congregation of the Worker Sisters of the Holy House of Nazareth, who continue his rich and fruitful apostolate. I sincerely hope that the message of this blessed, so timely because it concerns the dignity of work and the vocation of women in the Church and in society, is faithfully lived and passed on by the Worker Sisters and by all who refer to his spirituality.

4. I now turn to you, dear religious of the Order of Friars Minor, and to you, dear Brothers and Sisters who share in the joy of the beatification of these two illustrious Franciscans: *Mariano of Roccacasale* and *Diego Oddi*.

From the time of his youth, Bl. Mariano lived the spirit of poverty, so dear to the Franciscan tradition. Having lived in difficult times due to the persecution and suppression of so many religious institutions, he found in the hermitage of Bellegra the place for rediscovering the silence of nature and of the heart, to follow the poor and crucified Christ with greater radicalism.

His simple life, made up of contemplation, of taking in the poor and sharing in their suffering, of union with God and of solidarity with his brothers, is for all the faithful a shining example of Gospel faithfulness.

Fr *Diego Oddi*, for 40 years an angel of peace and goodness in the Subiaco area, carries with him the scent of the *Fioretti* of the Poverello of Assisi. His faith and his life, devoted to the search for the essential, form a significant fulfilment of the great tradition of Franciscan spirituality which directs all things to the search for God, desired and perceived as the "Supreme Good".

How useful it is for all of us to know and imitate the spiritual experience of these two humble Franciscans, who wisely united prayer and work, silence and witness, patience and charity. By their intercession, may they help us live today too the spirit of genuine conversion and acceptance of the Gospel that distinguished them.

5. I now affectionately greet the Capuchin religious and those, especially from Sardinia, who came to Rome for the beatification of *Nicholas of Gesturi*. He was a humble mendicant on the streets of Cagliari, who by his life of silence, became an eloquent message of the merciful love of God.

From being a religious "mendicant" to meet the needs of the friary, he became a brother "sought" by many. He closely followed the example of St Francis, who loved to invite everyone on the path of good with his example rather than with his words (cf. *Vita Seconda di Tommaso da Celano* CLVII, in *Fonti Francescane* 796) and wished his friars to do likewise (cf. *ibid.*, 1674; 1738).

May those devoted to him and those who belong to his religious family treasure the teaching that he transmitted to us with the testimony of his life.

Dear brothers and sisters, together let us give thanks to the Lord for the precious gift of these new blessed. Returning to your native countries and homes, you will take with you the commitment to follow their example. May you be sustained now and for ever by the maternal protection of Mary, Queen of all Saints. May you also be comforted by the certainty of the intercession of the new blessed and may you be accompanied by my Blessing, which I cordially impart to those present, to your communities and to your families.

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