



# The Holy See

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## **ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER JOHN PAUL II TO VARIOUS PILGRIM GROUPS**

*Saturday, 15 April 2000*

*Dear Brothers and Sisters!*

1. I extend a cordial welcome to all of you who have come on pilgrimage to Rome to pass through the Holy Door of the Great Jubilee. Thank you for your visit, by which you also intend to express the sentiments of communion that join you to the Successor of Peter.

I first greet you, dear faithful from the Diocese of Fabriano-Matelica, with your dear Bishop Luigi Scuppa, who has led you to this meeting. I thank him cordially for his kind expressions on your behalf. I would also like to extend my affectionate greeting to the priests, consecrated men and women and lay faithful of your diocesan community, with special attention to the sick, children, young people, families in difficulty and all who would have liked to come but are unable to be with us here today.

I know how deeply the Christian faith is rooted in the people of your region and how, since the fifth century, your Pastors have always remained in close union with the Apostolic See. Today's pilgrimage also reaffirms this vibrant communion which I was able to experience nine years ago during my visit to your Diocese. Strengthened by the ancient traditions that sustained your ancestors' journey of faith, move confidently towards the future and pass on to the younger generation your love for Jesus, man's only Redeemer. Persevere firmly in your fidelity to him and his Church.

2. You have come to Rome to celebrate your Jubilee and then to bear witness at home to the unfathomable riches of God's love. The providential time of this Holy Year is a pressing invitation to deepen your faith in Christ, who came into the world to reveal the heavenly Father's infinite love. Today it is urgently necessary for those who want to be his disciples to drink constantly at the

fountains of his Gospel in order to proclaim him without compromise. This is the way to become apostles of the new evangelization.

Believers, especially in our time, must never limit their horizons to intra-ecclesial activities. The great challenges of the current era call for courage and missionary daring. Do not tire, dear brothers and sisters of working for the renewal of society through effective witness, explicit proclamation and enlightened attention to the signs of the times. Put into practice every appropriate initiative in the apostolate. Thus you will offer guidance to all whom God will put on your daily path. I know of your efforts in this regard. May the desire for the new evangelization always be accompanied by deep prayer and continual listening to the Word of God. Strive, then, to be docile instruments of divine love, taking special care of those who are tried by problems or who are far from the faith. In seeing how you act, even those who say they do not believe will be prompted by grace to ask themselves about their eternal destiny. This could be the providential introduction to their encounter with Christ.

3. I now cordially greet the faithful from the parishes of the Most Holy Trinity in Nichelino, in the province of Turin, and of St Zeno in Cambiogo, in the Archdiocese of Milan. Dear friends, thank you for your visit, which has given me great pleasure. By your Jubilee pilgrimage to Rome you experience how every baptized person is called to be an active part of Christ's Mystical Body, present in every corner of the world. May you nourish and strengthen yourselves with his sacramental gifts, so that you may be instruments of God's tenderness in your respective communities and open to the needs of all humanity. May Mary, Mother of the Church, always accompany your steps.

4. My affectionate thoughts now turn to the members of the San Marino Retirement Federation and to the members of the Lyons Club of Rome Pantheon. Dear brothers and sisters, thank you for your presence. The Jubilee pilgrimage which you are making will certainly encourage you to continue on your journey of faith. Go back to your daily activities with renewed energy. Like the Good Samaritan, become a "*neighbour*" to every brother and sister whom Providence lets you meet, proclaiming the hope that never disappoints because it flows from the Gospel.

5. I cordially greet the group of young people from Marseilles. On the eve of Palm Sunday, which brings us into the central mystery of our faith, I invite you to follow Christ. Good Friday and the feast of Easter remind us that beyond all suffering there is the divine light. By contemplating the Saviour's Cross, you will discover the infinite love of God who gave himself for our salvation and who calls you to make something beautiful of your life. In this Jubilee year, may your pilgrimage to Assisi and Rome revive your faith in Christ who died and rose, and help you to build your future! After the example of Peter and Paul, and that of the *Poverello*, may you be generous witnesses to the Lord in the Church and in the world!

6. Dear brothers and sisters, on returning home, assure your families, your loved ones and your communities that the Pope is close to them with his affection. Entrust your every desire to Our Lady, to whom I know you are very devoted.

She will be the one to encourage you in your commitment to walk with greater promptness on the path of holiness, which is every Christian's vocation. I accompany you with my prayer and I bless you all.

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