



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE PILGRIMS GATHERED FOR THE BEATIFICATION
OF SIX SERVANTS OF GOD**

Monday, 21 October 2002

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

1. I am happy to welcome you this morning. With affection I greet you. I offer a special greeting to the Cardinals, Brothers in the Episcopate and in the Priesthood, Men and Women Religious.

We are in October, the month dedicated in a special way to the Rosary, "a prayer loved by a great number of saints" (Apostolic Letter *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, n. 1). In this context, we wish to reflect again on "the great things" God has done through the new Blesseds whom the Church presents to us as models to imitate and as our powerful intercessors with God.

2. I am pleased to greet the pilgrims who have come from Uganda, accompanied by Cardinal Emmanuel Wamala, as well as those from other parts of Africa and from other regions of the world to celebrate the beatification of *Blessed Daudi Okelo and Blessed Jildo Irwa*. As we noted yesterday, these two young catechists are a shining example of fidelity to Christ, commitment to Christian living and selfless dedication to the service of neighbour. With their hope firmly set on God and with a deep faith in Jesus' promise to be with them always, they set out to bring the Good News of salvation to their fellow countrymen, fully accepting the difficulties and dangers that they knew awaited them. May their witness serve to strengthen you as you seek to bear true Christian witness in every aspect of your lives. Through their intercession may the Church be an ever more effective instrument of goodness and peace in Africa and in the world. God bless Uganda.

3. I now speak to the faithful of the diocese of Treviso, accompanied by Bishop Paolo Magnani, who rejoice for the elevation to the glory of the altars their previous zealous and enlightened Pastor, *Andrea Giacinto Longhin*. I greet along with them with affection the dear Capuchin Friars.

Bishop Longhin devoted a great deal of attention to the formation of the clergy. In his spiritual testament he wished to share a special thought with his priests, exhorting them: "Become saints". He was always their attentive and loving father, as he was for all his people, especially for the humble and the poor.

The fruitfulness of the episcopal ministry of Blessed Longhin was expressed in the three pastoral visits he accomplished in the diocese, in the celebration of a Eucharistic Congress and a Catechetical Congress, in the realization of what can be considered his masterpiece, the diocesan Synod. He continues to be a very timely example of true evangelization.

4. A profound missionary yearning defines the life and spirituality of Blessed *Marcantonio Durando*. I am happy to greet Cardinal Severino Poletto, Archbishop of Turin, and the Fathers of the Congregation of the Mission and those who make up the great Vincentian religious family, that rejoice for the enrollment of one of their more illustrious members in the list of the Blessed. Defined by one of his confreres as "the St Vincent of Italy", he shone for the extraordinary charity that he knew how to infuse into every work he touched: from the activity of governing the community to the popular missions; from the spiritual guidance of the Daughters of Charity to the initiative of the "Centres of Mercy", a true and real anticipation of the modern centres for receiving and assisting the poor; and the founding of the "Nazarene Sisters" with their mission of taking care of the sick in their homes.

How much we need today this deep reminder of the roots of charity and evangelization. From the example of Blessed Marcantonio we should learn how to place ourselves in our turn at the service of the poor and most destitute, who are present even in today's society of well-being.

5. Dear pilgrims who have come to celebrate the beatification of *Mary of the Passion*, I am pleased to welcome you. I greet the Superior General of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary and the new Councillors. Dear Sisters, I thank God for your vocation that joins contemplation and mission, and for the valuable witness of your international communities, sign of fraternity and reconciliation among peoples. I encourage you to grow ever more in your fraternal love in a climate full of Franciscan joy and simplicity. I invite you to continue with charity and truth the dialogue you have begun with other cultures. In deepening your approach to the rich spirituality of your Foundress, may you help young people discover the joy of giving themselves entirely to Christ. To those faithful present, to the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, to the persons who work with them and who benefit from their apostolate, I whole-heartedly impart my Apostolic Blessing.

6. Finally, I greet the pilgrims who have come for the beatification of *Liduina Meneguzzi*, from the diocese of Padua with Archbishop Antonio Mattiazzo, their bishop, and the Sisters of St Francis de Sales, known as the Salesian Sisters. The more living and concrete dimension that characterizes the life of Sister Liduina is her profoundly missionary soul. In Africa she made herself "all things to all" in charity, assisting the injured, encouraging the afflicted and consoling the dying.

Sr Liduina impels us to love life from its first beginning to its natural sunset; to respect every human being, finding the response to the love of God in the generous and unselfish gift of self. This is the message full of joy and optimism with which the new Blessed invites us to open ourselves generously to the action of the grace of God.

7. Dear Brothers and Sisters, the new Blesseds impel and support our path to the Lord. The maternal protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary accompanies us whom we invoke in the month of October in a special way as we pray the Rosary.

While I entrust you and your activities to the intercession of the Virgin Mary and the new Blesseds, I wholeheartedly bless you along with your loved ones and those whom you meet in your missionary and charitable service.