



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II TO THE PILGRIMS WHO HAD COME FOR THE BEATIFICATION OF SIX SERVANTS OF GOD

Monday 28 April 2003

Your Eminences,

Venerable Brothers in the Episcopate and in the Priesthood,

Dear Religious,

*Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,*1. I am glad to meet with you who took part in the solemn Beatification ceremony yesterday in St Peter's Square. We have the pleasant opportunity this morning to contemplate and reflect once again on the marvels that God worked in the new Blesseds, who are particularly dear to you. I greet each one of you with affection and thank you for coming.2. I first address the large and varied Pauline Family and everyone from Piedmont, Italy, and the world who wanted to honour *Bl. James Alberione*. In the heart of that chosen priest from the Diocese of Alba beats once again the heart of the Apostle Paul who, won over by Christ, sought to announce him as "the Way, the Truth and the Life". Attentive to the signs of the times, Fr Alberione did not only open the modern "pulpits" of the media to evangelization, but conceived of his work as an organic action in the Church and at her service. This insight gave rise to 10 institutes in all, which, in the same spirit, continue the work he began. May Fr Alberione help his family, from Heaven, to be, as he desired, "St Paul alive today".3. I now greet the dear Capuchin Fathers and all who are celebrating the beatification of *Fr Mark of Aviano*, with a special thought for the pilgrims from Austria, accompanied by Cardinal Christoph Schönborn, Archbishop of Vienna. Mark of Aviano sets an example with his courageous apostolic action, appreciated by all, and his prayer, faithful to the most genuine Franciscan and Capuchin tradition. His interventions in the social field, whose purpose was always the good of souls, are also an encouragement to Christians today to defend and promote the Gospel values. May Bl. Mark of Aviano protect Europe, so that it may build unity without disregarding its common Christian roots.4. I then address with affection the spiritual Daughters of *Maria Christina Brando* who received from their Foundress a demanding programme of life and ecclesial service: to be united to Christ who gives himself for humanity in the Eucharist, and to spread their own love of God in humble and daily service to their needy brothers and sisters. May the Virgin Mary, to whose protection the new Blessed wanted to entrust the Sisters, Expiatory Victims of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, watch over you always, dear Religious, so that, keeping your charism intact, you may share your precious inheritance with the new generations.5. I also join the Daughters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and all who are rejoicing in the beatification of *Mother Eugenia Ravasco*. Feeling called "to do good for love of the Heart of Jesus", the new Blessed made herself an ardent and tireless apostle, a zealous educator of young people and

especially girls, to whom she was not afraid to propose lofty goals of Christian life. She recommended educators to follow the "pedagogy of love" and pointed out, as elements not to be overlooked in training young people, total respect for students and their freedom, discretion, understanding, joy and prayer. She was fond of repeating that to teach is to fulfil a Gospel mission. May Mother Eugenia continue from Heaven to sustain all who are carrying on her beneficial work in the Church.⁶ I greet you with warm cordiality, dear Little Sisters of the Holy Family, who are filled with joy because your Co-Foundress, Mother *Maria Domenica Mantovani*, has been raised to the glory of the altars. I greet the faithful from the Diocese of Verona, accompanied by their Pastor, Bishop Flavio Roberto Carraro, as well as the pilgrims from the different regions of Italy and from various parts of the world. At the school of the Holy Family of Nazareth, Maria Domenica Mantovani, following in the footsteps of the Founder, Bl. Giuseppe Nascimbeni, wanted to make herself a total gift to God for the good of her brethren. Learn from her, dear friends, to respond promptly to the voice of God, who calls every baptized person to strive for holiness in the ordinary circumstances of daily life.⁷ Lastly, my thoughts go to you, dear brothers and sisters who are celebrating the beatification of *Julia Salzano*, and especially to the Catechist Sisters of the Sacred Heart whom she founded. With indomitable courage, Bl. Salzano knew how to direct her educational action to all people of all categories, without distinction of age, social class or profession, in a certain sense anticipating the forms of new evangelization pointed out to the Church by the Second Vatican Council. I hope that you, her spiritual sons and daughters, will walk joyfully in her footsteps, ready to face any sacrifice to fulfil the mission that God entrusts to you.⁸ Dear brothers and sisters, may these new Blesseds help you all to "put out into the deep" (Lk 5: 4), entrusting yourselves as they did to Christ's words. And may the Virgin Mary, whom each of the six Blesseds tenderly venerated, help you to bring to completion the work that the Holy Spirit has begun in you. With these sentiments and hopes, I cordially bless you, along with your communities, your families and your loved ones.