



The Holy See

**LETTER OF THE HOLY FATHER
JOHN PAUL II
TO CARDINAL JAN PIETER SCHOTTE,
HIS SPECIAL ENVOY TO THE CONSECRATION
OF THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH
OF THE APOSTOLIC ADMINISTRATION
OF EASTERN SIBERIA IN IRKUTSK, RUSSIA**

*To my Venerable Brother Jan Pieter Schotte
Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church
General Secretary of the Synod of Bishops*

In this Jubilee Year, Christians are rejoicing everywhere and celebrating this happy event throughout the world with solemn ceremonies. And rightly so, since *2,000 years ago the Son of God was made man by the power of the Holy Spirit and was born of the Immaculate Virgin Mary* (*Tertio millennio adveniente*, n. 26). On this path the Church, at the end of the second millennium, has once again become the Church of martyrs, for those who bore witness to Christ, even to the shedding of blood, are a common inheritance of Catholics and all Christians (cf. *ibid.*, n. 37). In every land, especially in Siberia, martyrs of more recent times have sown bright and fruitful seeds, thus bringing forth new ranks of Christian faithful.

Therefore I welcomed with great joy the invitation of my Venerable Brother Jerzy Mazur - to whom last year I confidently entrusted the governance of this vast mission land, namely, the Apostolic Administration of Eastern Siberia for Latins - to the solemn consecration of the cathedral church in Irkutsk, recently built and dedicated to God in honour of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Impeded however by various difficulties, I have decided to send a Cardinal as my representative to that beloved community. For many reasons I feel that I can entrust this mission to you, my Venerable Brother, who are a very distinguished member of the Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and a faithful servant for many years of the Apostolic See. By this Letter, therefore, I

appoint you my *Special Envoy* to the solemn consecration of the aforesaid cathedral in Irkutsk, which will take place on 8 September next, the feast of the Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

During the liturgical ceremonies at which you will preside in my name, you are to encourage the faithful present with apostolic zeal to persevere in following Christ and devoutly to honour his Mother, as is the age-old custom in these regions. You are also to extend my special fraternal greetings to Christians of the Orthodox Church and other denominations, to the followers of the monotheistic religions and to all other men and women of good will.

May you be protected on your mission by the intercession of the heavenly Queen, who foretold the victory of her Immaculate Heart and salutary peace throughout the world. To the Apostolic Administration of Eastern Siberia for Latins I wish continual spiritual growth and the most abundant fruits of Christian charity.

Lastly, I ask you to impart the Apostolic Blessing in my name, as a pledge of divine graces and a sign of my desire to be present, to the zealous Apostolic Administrator of that Church, to all the Bishops present and to the priests, to men and women religious, and to all who will take part in the sacred rites.

Given in the Vatican, on 25 August 2000, the twenty-second year of my Pontificate.

IOANNES PAULUS PP. II

© Copyright 2000 - Libreria Editrice Vaticana

Copyright © Dicastero per la Comunicazione - Libreria Editrice Vaticana