



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY TO IRELAND

ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER JOHN PAUL II TO PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNICATION MEDIA

Dublin

Saturday, 29 September 1979

My friends of the communications media,

During my visit to Ireland, I wish to leave a special thought for all of you, a special word for each of you, so that in time to come you will remember: the Pope said many things to many people during his pastoral visit to Ireland, but this was his message to me.

That message is the second of the two great commandments of Jesus: "Love your neighbour as yourself". That message and that mandate should have a special meaning to you because your work makes you an honoured guest in millions of homes throughout the world.

Wherever the sounds you transmit are heard, wherever the images you capture are seen, wherever the words you report are read, *there* is your neighbour. *There* is a person you must love, someone for whose total well-being you must work—and even sometimes go without sleep and miss your meals. You are the instruments through whom that person—and millions of others—enjoys a wider experience and is helped to become a more effective member of the world community, a true neighbour to others.

Your profession, by its very nature, makes you servants, willing servants, of the community. Many of the members of that community will differ from you in political views, in material prospects, in religious conviction or in moral performance. As good communicators, you serve them all just the same—with love and with truth ; indeed with a love of truth. As good communicators, you build

bridges to unite, not walls to divide. As good communicators, you work out of the conviction that love and service of neighbour are the most important business in your lives.

All your concern, then, will be for the community's good. You will feed it on the truth. You will enlighten its conscience and serve as its peacemaker. You will set before the community standards that will keep it stretching for a way of life and a mode of behaviour worthy of its potential, worthy of human dignity.

You will inspire the community, fire its ideals, stimulate its imagination—if necessary, taunt it—into getting the best out of itself, the human best, the Christian best. You will neither yield to any inducement nor bend before any threat which might seek to deflect you from total integrity in your professional service of those who are not only your neighbours, but your brothers and sisters in the family of God, the Father of us all.

You think of yourselves as hard-headed realists, and I am well aware of the realities with which you must contend. Yet this is the Pope's word to you. It is no small thing he asks, no mean challenge he leaves with you. What he challenges you to do is to build, here in the Irish community and in the world community, the kingdom of God, the kingdom of love and of peace.

I thank you all sincerely for the work you are doing in the coverage of this visit. I ask you to bring my thanks and my love to your families, as I pray for you and for them in the beautiful Irish formula : "May God hold you in the hollow of his hand. May he keep you and your dear ones in his peace".

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