



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC PILGRIMAGE TO AFRICA

(MAY 2-12, 1980)

PRAYER OF JOHN PAUL II AT THE END OF THE MASS CELEBRATED IN ACCRA

Independence Square

Thursday, 8 May 1980

On this day of joy as we gather in your presence. O Mary, Mother of Jesus and Mother of his Church, we are mindful of the role you played in the evangelisation of this land. We are mindful of how - *in the beginning - the missionaries* came with the power of Christ's Gospel and *committed the success of their work to you.*

As Mother of Divine Grace you were with the missionaries in all their efforts, and you were with Mother Church of whom you are the type, the model and the supreme expression - in bringing Christ into Africa.

And as the Mother of the Church you presided over all the activities of evangelisation and over the implantation of the Gospel in the hearts of the faithful. You sustained the missionaries in hope and you gave joy to every new community that was born of the Church's evangelising activity.

You were there, with your intercession and your prayers, as the first grace of Baptism developed, and as those who had new life in Christ your Son came to a full appreciation of their sacramental life and Christian calling.

And you are here today as the Christian family gathers to celebrate the Gospel, to recall the mighty works of God, and to commit itself to the continued evangelisation of this land and continent "so that the word of the Lord may speed on and triumph"^[1].

We ask you, Mary, to help us to fulfil this mission which your Son has given to his Church and which, in this generation, falls to us. Mindful of your role as Help of Christians, we entrust ourselves to you in the work of carrying the Gospel ever deeper into the hearts and lives of all the people.

We entrust to you our missionary mandate and commit our cause totally to your prayers.

And, as Pastor of the universal Church, Vicar of your Son, *I, John Paul II, through you, O Mary, entrust the whole Church in Ghana and in all Africa to Christ our Lord.* Through you I present to Christ the Saviour the destiny of Africa, praying that his love and justice will touch the hearts of every man, woman and child of this continent.

Mary, I entrust all this to Christ through you, and I entrust all this to you for Christ your Son. I do it at a moment when I am closely united with my brother Bishops in celebrating the Gospel as "the power of salvation to all who believe"^[2]. I do it now, at this special moment when my brothers are so close to me in the exercise of our common responsibility for the Church in Africa. Accept, O Mary, this offering from all of us, and from all God's people, and present it to your Son. Present him a Church "holy and without blemish"^[3].

Be mindful, O Mother, of all who make up the Church in Africa. Assist the Bishops and their priests to be ever faithful to the word of God. Help sanctify the religious and the seminarians.

Intercede so that the love of your Son will penetrate into all families, so that it will console all those in pain and suffering, all those in need and want. Look kindly upon the catechists and all who fulfil a special role of evangelisation and Catholic education for the glory of your Son. Accept this our loving consecration and confirm us in the Gospel of your Son.

As we express *our deepest gratitude* to you for a century of your maternal care, we are strong in the conviction that the Holy Spirit is still overshadowing you, *so that in Africa you may bring forth Christ in every generation.*

To Jesus Christ your Son, with the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit be praise and thanksgiving for ever and ever. Amen.

[1] *2 Thess 3:1.*

[2] *Rom 1:16.*

[3] *Eph 5:27.*

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