



The Holy See

PASTORAL VISIT IN AUSTRALIA

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO A GROUP OF STUDENTS
FROM THE «KATHERINE SCHOOL OF THE AIR»**

Melbourne (Australia), 29 November 1986

Good morning, Children. As I fly above you on my way to Darwin, I am happy to speak with you and to all the young people of the outback. You are all very close to my heart.

Question 1: Very soon I will be making my first Holy Communion. Please, Holy Father, could you suggest something I could tell or ask Jesus on that day?

1. On the day of your First Holy Communion, I suggest that you speak to Jesus as to your best friend, for that is what he really is. He is the greatest friend you will ever have, and he wishes to be your special companion every day of your life. So talk to him as a friend who knows your name and loves you dearly. Tell him your secrets. Tell him your joys and the things that make you sad.

Tell him about the people whom you love, especially your parents and your brothers and sisters. Ask him to bless your families and all the families of the world. Above all tell him how much you love him. Speaking about her First Communion Day, Saint Teresa of the Child Jesus said that she felt loved by Jesus. It was then that she said to Jesus: "I love you, I give myself to you for ever". You can tell Jesus that too.

Question 2: Please, Holy Father, you know many children in the world. Which ones would you like us to pray for today?

2. All children are special to me because all children are special to Jesus. Jesus told his disciples: "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the Kingdom of God belongs". Jesus welcomes all children into his Kingdom. But he has a particular concern for children who suffer or who are lonely, because they could more easily become discouraged

and sad) and perhaps forget God's love. So I would suggest that, when you pray for others, you pray especially for children who are lonely and suffering.

Question 3: Holy Father, I would like to know what is the hardest thing about being a Pope?

3. The hardest thing about being Pope is to see that many people do not accept the love of Jesus, do not know who he really is and how much he loves them. Jesus came into the world and he offered his life on the Cross because he wanted everyone to be happy with him for ever in heaven. He is the Saviour of everyone in the whole world. But he does not force people to accept his love. He offers it to them and leaves them free to say yes or no. It fills me with joy to see how many people know and love our Lord, how many say yes to him. But it saddens me to see that some people say no. This is the hardest thing.

Question 4: Please, Holy Father, what would be the best prayer for children to say?

4. Do you remember that the Apostles asked Jesus to teach them how to pray? And he told them to pray the "Our Father", the prayer that I am sure you already pray every day. This is the best prayer for children to pray; it is the best prayer for any of us to pray. And remember when you say this prayer that God really is your loving Father. He knows each person by name and wants you to be happy with him for ever. So now I invite all of you who are listening to join me as we say this prayer together:

Our Father who art in heaven;
 hallowed be thy name.
 Thy kingdom come.
 Thy will be done on earth,
 as it is in heaven.
 Give us this day our daily bread.
 And forgive us our trespasses
 as we forgive those who trespass against us.
 And lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil. Amen.

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