



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF PAUL VI TO THE SISTERS OF THE LITTLE COMPANY OF MARY

Tuesday, 8 April 1969

Dear Sisters of the Little Company of Mary,

As you know, We have today wished to come and visit Our dear friend and brother in the episcopate, the Most Reverend Joseph McGeough, whose devotion to the Church and whose self-sacrifice in the service of the Holy See We have long known and appreciated.

His readiness to face difficulties and hardship in order to assist in the universal mission of charity which is the divinely given duty of this See of Rome is for all a model and an aspiration.

We are very glad that the circumstance has given Us this opportunity of meeting you, Sisters, gathered here for a General Chapter from the far-flung fields where you too are devoting yourselves to self-forgetting works inspired by that supernatural love without which, as St Paul told the Corinthians, prophecies, tongues and knowledge of mysteries are nothing (cf. *1 Cor.* 13).

May the Holy Spirit lend you His wise aid in the task which you are undertaking in response to the call of the Successors of the Apostles assembled in the recent Vatican Council. You have the duty of renewing appropriately the rules that govern your life of prayer and service, your bringing of yourselves and others to sanctity.

Consider what your great foundress would wish the Little Company, now spread throughout the world, to do in today's circumstances. Traditions that have proved their value by withstanding the test of time must be retained. And, in considering the new, remember that it is an interior renewal, not mere external changes, that must be sought. The Council Fathers stated that «even the most desirable changes made on behalf of contemporary needs will fail of their purpose unless a renewal of spirit gives life to them» (Decree *Perfectae caritatis*, 2).

We pray that your deliberations will result in such a renewal of spirit. We invoke divine grace and guidance on you as you prepare to open the way for such a renewal. And, as an encouragement to you, and a pledge of that assistance from on high, We bless you and all the members of the Little Company of Mary with Our special, paternal Apostolic Benediction.