



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC PILGRIMAGE
OF HIS HOLINESS PAUL VI
TO WEST ASIA, OCEANIA AND AUSTRALIA

***ADDRESS OF POPE PAUL VI
TO THE PONTIFICAL REPRESENTATIVES OF ASIA****

*Manila, Philippines
Saturday, 28 November 1970*

We wish to express our happiness at being for a few brief moments among you, our very close and faithful collaborators. We offer you our lively thanks for the care with which you have cooperated in the success of this meeting of the Episcopal Conferences of Asia. We would make a special and very warm mention of the Apostolic Nuncio in the Philippines, whose competence and devotion, aided by dynamic cooperation, have made it possible for us to accomplish this first stage of our journey to the Far East.

As you are well aware, our first desire on the occasion of these visits is to establish fraternal contact with the bishops, to encourage them in the concerted planning of their pastoral work – with due respect for the principle of subsidiarity and for the link of episcopal collegiality – to put progressively into practice the great guidelines of the Council.

The role of Nuncios is also evolving. Until now, the Nuncio was little more than the Pope's representative to Governments and Churches. His activity with regard to the Churches was above all of a hierarchical and administrative nature; in a certain sense he remained a stranger to the local Church.

Today, the Nuncio must place a more pronounced pastoral accent on his work. He too is at the service of the Kingdom of God as it goes forward in the land.

If then we come to take part in the deliberations of the great regional episcopal assemblies, as last year in Kampala, here now in Manila, and as we shall do on our journey to Sydney, our purpose is to underline our communion and our solidarity with the pastoral cares of each region of the world. Collegiality means love and shared responsibility, as we said at the opening of the final session of last year's meeting of the Synod of Bishops. You, the Representatives of the Pope, must be for the local hierarchies the living sign of this communion and this solidarity, sharing as far as you can their pastoral preoccupations. Coming from the heart of Christianity, you are the witnesses of the catholicity, that is, the universality of the Christian message. Sharing as you do in the special charism of Peter, you represent in a privileged way the demands of unity in the desired diversity of expressions of the same faith. By reason of your close attachment to the See of the head of the apostolic college, you constitute to some extent a link between the individual churches of the entire world.

This cannot be conceived without a more fraternal approach to the life of the local churches. It is your task to find, for each individual case, the practical modes of that approach, in a spirit of service and with the consciousness of being above all the bonds of love.

As we offer you our cordial encouragement and the assurance of our profound confidence in your exacting apostolate, we bestow on you and your collaborators our paternal Apostolic Blessing.

*ORa n.50 p.2.