



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI TO MEMBERS OF THE NEOCATECHUMENAL WAY

Paul VI Audience Hall

Thursday, 12 January 2006

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I warmly thank you for your visit, which gives me the opportunity to send a special greeting also to the other members of the Neocatechumenal Way scattered in so many parts of the world. I address my thoughts to each one present, starting with the venerable Cardinals, Bishops and priests. I greet those in charge of the Neocatechumenal Way: Mr Kiko Argüello, whom I thank for his words on your behalf, Ms Carmen Hernández and Fr Mario Pezzi. I greet the seminarians, the young people and especially the families that are preparing to receive a special missionary "mandate" to go to various nations, especially in Latin America.

This is a task that fits into the context of the new evangelization in which the family plays a role more important than ever. You have asked that the Successor of Peter confer this mandate as my venerable Predecessor John Paul II did in the past, on 12 December 1994, because you intend your apostolic action to take place in the heart of the Church, in total harmony with her directives and in communion with the particular Churches in which you are going to work, making the most of the riches of the charisms that the Lord has awakened through the Founders of the Way.

Dear families, the crucifix you will receive will be your inseparable travelling companion while you proclaim with your missionary action that only in Jesus Christ, who died and was raised, is there salvation. You will be his docile and joyful witnesses, walking the highways of every continent in simplicity and poverty, sustained by ceaseless prayer and listening to the Word of God and nourished by participation in the liturgical life of the particular Churches to which you are sent.

The importance in evangelization of the liturgy, and in particular of Holy Mass, has often been

stressed by my Predecessors, and your long experience can certainly confirm that the centrality of the mystery of Christ celebrated in the liturgical rites is a privileged and indispensable way to build living and persevering Christian communities.

Precisely to help the Neocatechumenal Way to render even more effective its evangelizing action in communion with all the People of God, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments recently imparted to you in my name certain norms concerning the Eucharistic Celebration, after the trial period that the Servant of God John Paul II conceded. I am sure you will attentively observe these norms that reflect what is provided for in the liturgical books approved by the Church.

By faithfully keeping to every Church directive, you will make your apostolate even more effective, in tune and in full communion with the Pope and the Pastors of every Diocese. And in so doing, the Lord will continue to bless you with abundant pastoral fruits.

In fact, you have been able to do a great deal in these years and numerous vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life have been born in your communities.

Today, however, our attention is addressed particularly to families. More than 200 of them are about to be sent out on mission; these are families who leave without much human support but who are counting first and foremost on the support of divine Providence.

Dear families, you can witness with your history that the Lord does not abandon those who entrust themselves to him. Continue to spread the Gospel of life. Wherever your mission leads you, let yourselves be illumined by the comforting words of Jesus: "Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides", and again, "Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself.

Sufficient for a day is its own evil" (Mt 6: 33-34). In a world that seeks human certainties and earthly reassurance, show that Christ is the firm rock on which to construct the building of your own existence and that trust placed in him is never in vain.

May the Holy Family of Nazareth protect you and be your model. I assure you of my prayer for you and for all the members of the Neocatechumenal Way, while I affectionately impart to each one the Apostolic Blessing.

