



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY TO THE FAR EAST AND MAURITIUS

EUCHARISTIC ADORATION AT NONYONG-DONG PARISH

HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II

Seoul (Korea)
Saturday, 7 October 1989

Chinae-hanun hyongje chamae yorobun,

1. *Songche ane Chu Yesu-nimun hangsang chanmi padusoso!*

It is with great joy that I offer praise to our Lord together with you. To all of you – bishops, priests, religious and laity – I say “*Chanmi Yesu! Chu-nimul chanmihapshida!*”.

My special greeting goes to Nonhyon-dong Parish: to the priests and sisters, the parish council and all the parishioners who have welcomed me here with such love and enthusiasm. I also wish to greet all the dedicated men and women who serve as extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist. It is most fitting that *my first stop among the Korean people* should be in a church such as this, where the minds and hearts of the faithful are constantly raised up in adoration before Christ in the Most Holy Eucharist,

– Christ offering himself to the Father in Sacrifice for our salvation;

– Christ giving himself to us to be eaten as the Bread of Life, so that we, too, may give ourselves for the life of others;

– Christ consoling and strengthening us on our earthly pilgrimage with his abiding presence and

friendship.

In beholding the Word made flesh, now sacramentally present in the Eucharist, the eyes of our bodies are united with the eyes of faith in gazing upon *the presence "par excellence" of Emmanuel, "God with us"*, until that day when the sacramental veil will be lifted in the Kingdom of heaven.

If we are to experience the Eucharist as the "source and summit of all Christian life" (*Lumen Gentium*, 11), then we must celebrate it with faith, receive it with reverence, and allow it to *transform our minds and hearts through the prayer of adoration*. Only by deepening our Eucharistic communion with the Lord through personal prayer can we discover what he asks of us in daily life. Only by drinking deeply from the source of life-giving water "welling up within us" (Cfr. *Jo* 4, 14) can we grow in faith, hope and charity. The image of the Church in worship before the Blessed Sacrament reminds us of the need to enter into *a dialogue with our Redeemer*, to respond to his love and to love one another.

2. Dear *brother priests* who are gathered here today in such numbers with the Pope: this great sacrament of love, so rich in meaning for the Christian life of all the faithful, has a special meaning for all of us who are privileged to celebrate it *in persona Christi*. The Second Vatican Council speaks of the "pastoral charity" that flows above all from the Eucharist, "the centre and root of the whole life of the priest" (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 14). The Council goes on to say that the priest must strive to make his own what is enacted in the Eucharistic Sacrifice, but that "this cannot be achieved unless priests themselves penetrate ever more intimately through prayer into the *mystery of Christ...*" (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 14). And so they should "seek and perseveringly ask God for a *true spirit of adoration*" (*Ibid*, 19).

Dear brothers, what is this pastoral charity that flows from the Eucharistic Sacrifice and that increases through prayer and adoration? To answer that question we must enter into the mystery of Christ. He "emptied himself, taking the form of a servant... and being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross" (*Phil.* 2, 6-8). This is the Eternal Priest who is present in the Eucharist: *the Son of God who "emptied himself"* and whom God raised up for our salvation, *the Son of Man "who came not to be served but to serve"* (*Marc.* 10, 45).

Pastoral charity is the virtue by which we imitate Christ in his selfgiving and service. It is not just what we do, but our gift of self, which manifests Christ's love for his flock. Pastoral charity determines our way of thinking and acting, our way of relating to people. It makes special demands on us, because as pastors we must be particularly sensitive to the truth contained in Saint Paul's words: "All things are lawful, but not all things are helpful... not all things build up" (*1Cor.* 10, 23).

3. If we are to imitate Christ's gift of self, we who are priests must live and act in ways that enable us to be close to all the members of the flock, from the greatest to the least. We will want to *dwell in their midst*, whether they be rich or poor, learned or in need of education. We will *readily share their joys and sorrows*, not only in our thoughts and prayers but also in their company, so that through our presence and our ministry they can experience God's love. We will want to embrace a simple lifestyle, in imitation of Christ who became poor for our sake. If a priest is lacking poverty of spirit, it will be difficult for him to understand the problems of the weak and the forgotten. If he is not readily available to all, the poor and needy will find it almost impossible to approach him and to open themselves to him without embarrassment.

Pastoral charity also makes us eager to serve the common good of the whole Church, and to build up the Body of Christ, avoiding every form of scandal or division. In the words of the Council: "Faithfulness to Christ cannot be separated from faithfulness to his Church. Hence pastoral charity demands that priests, if they are not to run in vain, should always work within *the bond of union with the bishops and their fellow priests*. If they act in this manner, priests will find unity of life in the unity of the Church's own mission" (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 14). Christ did not hesitate to lay down his life in obedience to the Father. Following his example, priests must have the *prudence, maturity, and humility* to work in harmony and under lawful authority for the good of Christ's Body, and not arbitrarily on their own.

Pastoral charity also extends to the missionary field within the Church universal. As I said to the priests and religious during my first visit to your country in 1984, the solemn challenge of your lives is *"to show Jesus to the world, to share Jesus with the world"* (Cfr. Ioannis Pauli PP. II *Allocutio Seuli ad Presbyteros et Religiosos habita, die 5 maii 1984: Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II, VII, 1* [1984] 1259 ss.). Today more than ever we are conscious of the spiritual and material needs of people even in the most distant places from ourselves. I urge you to cooperate generously with your bishops in helping to carry out the *Church's worldwide mission* of preaching the Gospel. May you continue to promote a true missionary consciousness among all the Catholic people, while working and praying for more Korean priestly and religious vocations destined for the foreign missions.

4. Dear brothers, I know that your dedicated and zealous ministry is an important part of the Church's vigorous life in Korea. You are very involved in your parishes, in their many organized apostolates and sodalities, and in numerous catechumenate classes. Given the many demands that are made on you, it is all the more important that you be *men of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament*, that you "ask God for a true spirit of adoration" (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 19) in order to be filled with love of Christ. Only in this way can you hope to grow in the pastoral charity that makes your life and ministry fruitful.

To prayer we must add the continuing spiritual and intellectual formation that is so essential if we are to keep giving of ourselves in imitation of Christ. Our *interior life must be renewed and*

replenished through spiritual exercises and reading, and through study. Like the householder whom Jesus mentions in the Gospel, the priest is one “who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old” (*Matth.* 13, 52).

Finally, to the laity who are present and to all the laity of Korea I make this appeal: *Pray for your priests.* Pray for vocations to the priesthood. It is precisely in the presence of the Eucharist that we understand and appreciate best the gift of the priesthood, for the two are inseparable. Your participation in the life of the Church and your commitment to live the Gospel are a great source of encouragement to priests. You not only inspire them to even greater pastoral charity, but you also create a fertile field where vocations to the priesthood can grow in response to God’s call.

Dear brothers and sisters, dear brother bishops, dear brothers in the priesthood: *Praised be Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the altar!* Praised be our Saviour, whose presence in the Eucharist accompanies us on our earthly pilgrimage!

Songche ane Chu Yesu-numun ijerobuto yong'wonhi chanmi padusoso! Amen.

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