



The Holy See

FUNERAL MASS FOR CARDINAL PAULOS TZADUA **HOMILY OF JOHN PAUL II** Monday, 16 December 2003 1.

"Let your loins be girded and your lamps burning" (Lk 12: 35). The season of Advent is the background to this funeral celebration in which we are offering the Eucharistic sacrifice for our beloved and venerable Brother, Cardinal Paulos Tzadua, Archbishop emeritus of Addis Ababa. The Lord summoned him in these very days when there is a pressing call to watch, wait and hope. Luke the Evangelist has just warned us: *"You also must be ready; for the Son of man is coming at an hour you do not expect"* (Lk 12: 40). The Christian must always be ready to meet the passage of death. He or she looks toward the future - both personal and universal - in the perspective of the parousia and directs all things to this ultimate, fundamental reality. Indeed, the event that awaits us is important: the "face to face" encounter with God (cf. I Cor 13: 12). 2. *"Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes"* (Lk 12: 37). We are pleased to consider this brother of ours, as we take leave as one of the "servants" the Gospel mentions whom the "Master" finds ready upon his return. A zealous priest and Bishop, he spent his life for Christ and for the Church. With a meaningful decision, he chose for his coat of arms the motto: *"For Jesus Christ"*. In imitation of his Lord, he became the servant of his brethren, making available to them those choice qualities with which he was endowed, such as his vast knowledge acquired through study, especially in the field of law. However, over and above his pastoral work, more than anything he gave of himself, demonstrating everywhere holiness of life and constant apostolic longing. So it was that in the various places where he was called to carry out his priestly and episcopal ministry, he is remembered with true esteem and veneration. 3. We like to think of him as a generous and active Pastor of that chosen portion of the Church which is in Africa. He made himself her authoritative spokesman in the Synod of Bishops, in which he took part first as President of the Ethiopian Bishops' Conference and later, as the Cardinal Archbishop of Addis Ababa. This aspect of his ministry culminated in the Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for Africa that was celebrated in Rome in 1994 in which, as the Third President Delegate, he played an important role. The People of God are indebted to him for his outstanding concern for lay people, to whose vocation, formation and mission he always showed himself particularly attentive, faithful to the teaching of the Second Vatican Council. 4. *"By his great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead"* (I Pt 1: 3). In moments of trial and grief such as this, recourse to the word of God is a source of comfort and hope to believers. In his Second Letter the Apostle Peter reminds us that Christ conquered death with his Resurrection. Celebrating the memorial of his Pasch, we pray today for the power of the risen Lord for our venerable and dear Cardinal Paulos Tzadua. In heaven, "an inheritance which is imperishable" (I Pt 1: 4) is in store for him, a faithful servant of the Church. The feast of life and joy awaits him (cf. Is 25: 6). May the Virgin Mary receive him and accompany him to Paradise, so that he may enjoy for eternity the blessedness of the righteous. Amen! ©

Copyright © Dicastero per la Comunicazione - Libreria Editrice Vaticana