



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II TO DELEGATIONS OF OTHER CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

22 October 1978

Beloved brothers in Christ,

We wish first of all to thank you from the bottom of our heart for having come here today. Your presence, in fact, bears witness to our common will to establish closer and closer ties among us and to overcome the divisions inherited from the past. These divisions are, we have already said, an intolerable scandal, hindering the proclamation of the good news of salvation given in Jesus Christ, and the announcement of this great hope of liberation which the world needs so much today.

At this first meeting, we are anxious to tell you of our firm resolution to go forward along the way to unity in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council and following the example of our predecessors. A fine stretch has already been covered, but we must not stop before arriving at the goal, before realizing this unity which Christ wishes for his Church and for which he prayed.

The will of Christ, the witness to be borne to Christ, that is the motive that incites one and all of us not to tire or become discouraged in this effort. We are confident that he who began this work among us, will give us abundantly the strength to persevere and carry it out successfully.

Please say to those whom you represent, and to everyone, that the commitment of the Catholic Church to the ecumenical movement, such as it was solemnly expressed in the Second Vatican Council, is irreversible.

We rejoice at your relations of brotherly trust and collaboration with our Secretariat for Unity. We know that you are searching patiently, along with it, for the solution of the differences that still separate us, and the means of progressing together in more and more complete faithfulness to all

aspects of the truth revealed in Jesus Christ. We assure you that we will do everything to help you.

May the Spirit of love and truth grant that we may meet often and in increasing closeness, more and more in deep communion in the mystery of Christ our one Saviour, our one Lord. May the Virgin Mary be for us an example of this docility to the Holy Spirit which is the deepest centre of the ecumenical attitude; may our answer always be like hers: I am your servant, let it be to me according to your word (cf. Lk 1:38).

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