



# The Holy See

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***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II  
AT THE CONCLUSION OF HIS VISIT  
TO THE HOSPITAL OF THE CHILD JESUS***

*Sunday, 7 January 1979*

*Brothers and Sisters,*

Allow me now, concluding this pastoral visit to this Hospital of the Child Jesus, to address a few simple words of greeting and encouragement to all of you who work in this Institute for the relief and cure of the little patients.

Let a cordial thought go in the first place to Mr Commissioner and to the whole administrative and medical Management for the indefatigable activity carried out, and for the future programmes which they intend to implement in order to make this place of healing correspond more and more to modern medical requirements. Then I greet the doctors, the assistants, the Sisters and children's nurses, in whom I like to see a reflection of the thaumaturgical figure of Christ, who dedicated such a large part of his ministry to curing the sick and relieving the afflicted.

And what shall I say to you, dear children, patients in this Hospital? I will tell you that I came up here to the Janiculum specially for you: to see you, to express to you personally all my affection for you, and to bring comfort in your sufferings, due both to illness and to the fact of being separated from your parents and your home. I pray that you may recover quickly and thus find again the joy of living in the midst of the dear members of your family.

I wish to address a particularly affectionate greeting also and above all to you parents and relatives of the little patients. You are bearing the drama of the illness of your children and, with imploring eyes, are asking yourselves the reason for innocent pain. Rest assured that you are not alone, or abandoned: you do not suffer in vain! Your suffering conforms you to Christ, who alone can give a meaning and value to every act of your life.

Finally, to all of you present here, who attend this hospital in one way or another and apply yourselves to works of mercy and spiritual and social welfare, I will recall the promise that the Lord Jesus made to those who seek him in the sick: "I was sick and you visited me... as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me" (cf. Mt 25:34-40).

Expressing to you warmly my appreciation of the service you render the little patients, I exhort you to continue your mission with Christian faith, which makes you perceive in the sick person the very image of God. At the same time, in the name of the Child Jesus, after whom this hospital is named, and in the name of the Blessed Virgin, invoked by you as "Salus infirmorum", I impart to all my special Apostolic Blessing, which can also be extended to the members of your families who have remained at home.

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