The Holy See

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II DURING THE CONSISTORY FOR THE CREATION OF FOURTEEN NEW CARDINALS

Paul VI Hall
30 June 1979

Revered Brothers,

We rejoice deeply that it has been granted to us to celebrate with you this Consistory, the first one since, by mysterious divine disposition, we were raised to Peter's See. It is a great event in the life of the Church. It is a question, indeed, of creating new Cardinals, who will then be part of the Sacred College, of those whom the Sovereign Pontiffs have as their main advisers and helpers in the government of the universal Church. Above all, according to the established norms, upon them falls the right and the duty to elect the Roman Pontiff, the successor of him whom Christ constituted the "lasting and visible source and foundation of the unity both of faith and of communion" (Constit. *Lumen Gentium,* 18).

Although the number of those who are added to this College today is relatively small—as you know, there exist some limits with regard to the number of Cardinals—nevertheless also these Revered Brothers of ours, who are about to be enrolled in the Senate of the Roman Pontiff, if this term can be used, represent the universal Church in a certain way.

1. It is not without reason and significance that we have convened this chosen gathering today, at the end of the month of June. It is well known that our Predecessor, of unforgotten memory, Pope Paul VI, often gathered the Cardinals in his presence about this time and addressed very serious words to them, sometimes also for the nomination of new members of the Sacred College. He would take advantage of the occasion of the anniversary of his election—which was 21 June—or of that of the solemn beginning of his Pontificate, which was 30 June, or of his name day, which was 24 June. He was accustomed then to review briefly the internal problems of the Church. It is true that this same Predecessor of ours, following the custom of recent Roman Pontiffs, used to speak to the Co11ege of Cardinals also on Christmas Eve to deal with affairs and questions

concerning the Church and the world; but generally moved by different reasons than in the month of June, and often treating wider subjects. Complying therefore, with what has become a kind of tradition, we link up with the Pontificate of that Predecessor of ours, to whom we are bound also by many other ties, as we set forth at greater length in the Encyclical "Redemptor Hominis". So today we think again with special intensity of Paul VI's Pontificate, from which we are separated only by the very short interval of the apostolic ministry of John Paul I, as successor of St Peter.

2. The time that followed the Second Vatican Council, is distinguished—as everyone knows—by the fact that the whole Church must commit herself to carrying out the decisions of the same universal Synod. They aim at nothing else than the *renewal* of the Church: it is necessary—to use the words of our Predecessor—"for her to restore herself to that conformity with her divine model, which is her fundamental duty" (*AAS*, 55 [1963], p. 850).

This renewal, according to the same Council, concerns many aspects: the most important one regards the constant effort that the Church must make to become increasingly more aware of her mission of salvation; which is also perpetual service of the fundamental cause of man, nations and the whole human family. This awareness must entail that certainty about the task of salvation, which is derived from confident faith and sincere humility, and makes us capable of carrying out courageously the work of renewal. This work must constantly be measured—so to speak—with the *"universal yardstick" of the People of God,* which, while it participates in the salvific mission of Christ himself, at the same time completes it in various ways, according to the "gift" that each one receives, for the purpose of leading himself and others to salvation.

Certainly, it is difficult to measure correctly, with only human criteria of judgment, the process of this renewal, understood in such a wide sense. It may sometimes even happen that we are mistaken in judging what is happening, because divine Providence has its own ways to lead men, their society, nations and the Church. It follows necessarily that every *criterion* of ours *to draw up a balance street of the situation of the Church,* is insufficient; yet we absolutely need such a balance sheet, especially in certain times, such as today. So when we speak and judge certain facts, we must always refer in the first place to God's loving plans, and to his holy judgments on human conduct.

3. One of the main instruments to make this renewal and unity, characteristic of the Church, both local and universal, that is, of the People of God, is certainly the collegiality of the Bishops. In this connection it is right to highlight the *meeting of the bishops of Latin America* celebrated in Puebla. Its fruits of keener awareness of the mission of the Church and of her task of evangelization in Latin America, in the wake of the Council and of the Apostolic Exhortation "Evangelii Nuntiandi", are already beginning to be gathered, and open up hope for the future. Certainly, the subjects that were dealt with there were of supreme interest for the present and the future.

Perhaps we were granted the privilege of bringing something to this meeting, having presided over

its beginnings. It is useful hereto repeat the words that our predecessor Paul VI spoke at the close of the third session of the Vatican Council, expressing himself on collegiality as follows: "It is this deep and essential relationship that makes the episcopate a unified assembly which finds in the bishop who is Peter's successor not a different and extraneous authority, but its centre and its leader" (*AAS*, 56 [1964] , p. 1011).

It should be added that in the last few months the life of the Church has had other events of this kind, such as the "Symposium" of the Council of the Episcopal Conferences of Europe, held in Rome, to deal with "the young and faith". These events were a significant manifestation of collegial conscience and of the duty regarding the pastoral ministry of Bishops and of the Episcopal Conferences. But none of them can be compared for importance with that of Puebla. We also noted with pleasure the excellent work done by the Latin-American Episcopal Council, or CELAM, for the preparation of that meeting, and the intense participation of many prelates.

4. It was also owing to the Puebla meeting that our *first journey,* at the beginning of the Pontificate, was to Mexico, passing first through the Republic of Santo Domingo. In this way we were able to visit for nearly a week the Church established in that region. We still remember with deep gratitude how many people we met on that visit. Above all we thank God and his Mother, who, especially through the Guadalupe Shrine dedicated to her, has become the merciful Mother and Lady, not only of Mexico, but of the whole of America, particularly Latin America. In particular we recall the President of the Republic of Santo Domingo and the President of Mexico, as well as the bishops, priests, and religious men and women of both nations.

But that visit to the Mexican Church gave us the opportunity to be in contact almost continually with the Catholic people of that State, who, moved by the spirit of faith, thronged around us enthusiastically wherever we travelled, wherever we stopped. So let our deep gratitude go to divine Providence, who granted us the possibility, by means of this visit at the beginning of our Pontificate, to be able to bear witness to *the love and reverence of the Apostolic See for that people which has experienced so many difficulties because of faithfulness to Christ and his Church.* In the journey to Mexico, we also stopped and celebrated the Holy Eucharist in the place from which the evangelization of America started; just as on the way back we were able to meet the Christian community of the Bahamas.

5. We feel equally grateful for the recent *journey to Poland*, which gave us the opportunity to see again our native country from 2 to 9 June; that is, to visit again the land from where the Lord in his inscrutable designs called us to the Roman See of St Peter. The main reason for the journey was the jubilee of St Stanislaus: it was the ninth centenary of the martyrdom, at the hands of the king, of that bishop of the see of Krakow (which we ourself, his heir, as it were, governed until a short time ago).

Invited by the Polish bishops headed by Cardinal Wyszynski, we celebrated the jubilee together

with the citizens of our nation, *almost following the historical course of the country:* it begins at Gniezno and leads to Krakow passing through "Jasna Gora", the Bright Mountain. We stopped first at Warsaw, the present capital of Poland, and when we were staying at Krakow, we celebrated the Holy Eucharist at Oswiecim (Auschwitz), which has become a kind of Golgotha of our times, where in the so-called starvation bunker Blessed Maximilian Kolbe died, after having offered his life for a companion.

While making this journey, led by history, we renewed thanks to God One and Three for the gift of holy baptism which our fellow citizens received a thousand years ago. There was also the opportunity to greet the neighbouring Slav peoples, who entered the Church in that same period. Finally we asked for the gifts of the Holy Spirit for their perseverance in faith and hope.

While this pontifical service in our native country is still present in our memory, we wish to emphasize again the significance of the invitation that the public Authorities addressed to us. With it they not only recognized that they were aware that we—on whom it has fallen to hold the highest office in the Catholic Church—came from their nation, but they also manifested *the dignity and importance* due to the international character of this visit of ours. Therefore we are very grateful to the Authorities both of the Republic and of the Church, which facilitated it, and then particularly to the immense multitude of those who, having been born in the same country in which we were born, came to meet us in the spirit of religious unity.

6. Paul VI, whom we cannot forget, introduced into his many journeys this way of carrying out the pontifical ministry. May such journeys be of use in the future *to manifest the unity of the People of God in the various places of the earth, in the different regions and nations.*

Parallelly with these events which we have recalled with great joy, there has proceeded and proceeds the constant and orderly work of the Church, which is concentrated in the first place on the tasks that the Episcopal College proposes to carry out under the guidance of St Peter's successor.

The *Synod of Bishops* has become a very special instrument of this collegial cooperation, since it is extended to the universal Church. An Apostolic Exhortation will shortly be published in which there will he gathered the fruits of the work of the Ordinary Session of the Synod of Bishops celebrated in 1977, *which had as its object catechesis.* Likewise the following Session in 1980 is already being prepared. It will examine the subject, already duly approved: "The role of the Christian family in the modern world." The General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops, after its Council elected in the preceding Session had examined them at a general meeting, has sent the "Lineamenta" (Outline Document) everywhere, so that they may be widely discussed in the Episcopal Conferences.

7. As regard the Catholic Centres of study at the university level, an important thing has occurred,

the promulgation of the Apostolic Constitution "Sapientia Christiana", which at the time fixed therein, will replace the Constitution now in force, "Deus Scientiarum Dominus". From that moment the "Normae quaedam", issued in 1968, obligatory for the time necessary to prepare the new Constitution according to the will and the mind of the Second Vatican Council, will no longer remain in force.

To prepare this Constitution, several years were necessary. Without speaking of all the work carried out, let it suffice to recall that all the Episcopal Conferences and all Catholic Centres of study at the university level, were consulted.

We hope, therefore, that the sacred disciplines will receive a new impulse and be able to consolidate Faith, guide morality, and drive out errors, in obedience to the Magisterium of the Church.

Finally, we cannot forget, but must recall at least briefly, ecumenism, which was one of the principal intentions of the universal Synod (cf. Decree *Unitatis Redintegratio*, 1). It can be said, in short, that in these months various meetings have been held with representatives of the Christian religions not yet united with us in full unity. While we warmly rejoice at this, we urgently exhort everyone—because "the concern for unity belongs to the Church as a whole" (ibid. 5)—to persevere more and more eagerly in the noble effort to reconstitute this unity, willed by Christ.

It can also be added that there have been various contacts with non-Christians, and thus we have striven to obey the Second Vatican Council, which ordained that in this way "we work together to build up the world in a spirit of genuine peace" (cf. Const. *Gaudium et Spes*, 92).

This, Revered Brothers, is what our heart urged us to say. May the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, whose feast we celebrated yesterday, and who bore witness to their love for Christ with their blood, protect this Roman Church and this Apostolic See; with which you have a special bond. Above all, however, let us ask for the help of the noble Mother of God, to whom we confidently entrust you and all our brothers and sons. To strengthen you in the high rank you occupy in the holy Church, we willingly impart to you the Apostolic Blessing.

And now we are glad to list the distinguished Prelates whom we have considered worthy of being admitted to your eminent College at this sacred Consistory:

Agostino Casaroli, tit. Archbishop of Carthage, Pro-Secretary of State;

Giuseppe Caprio, tit. Archbishop of Apollonia, Pro-President of the Administration of the Property of the Apostolic See;

Marco Cè, Patriarch of Venice;

Egano Righi-Lambertini, tit. Archbishop of Doclea, apostolic Nuncio in France;

Joseph-Marie Trinh Van-Can, Archbishop of Hanoi;

Ernesto Civardi, tit. Archbishop of Serdica, Secretary of the Sacred Congregation for Bishops;

Ernesto Corripio Ahumada, Archbishop of Mexico;

Joseph Asajiro Satowaki, Archbishop of Nagasaki;

Roger Etchegaray, Archbishop of Marseilles;

Anastasio Alberto Ballestrero, Archbishop of Turin;

Tomás O'Fiaich, Archbishop of Armagh;

Gerald Emmett Carter, Archbishop of Toronto;

Franciszek Macharski, Archbishop of Krakow;

Wladyslaw Rubin, tit. Bishop of Serta, Auxiliary of the Cardinal Archbishop of Gniezno, Secretary General of the Synod of Bishops.

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