



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE BISHOPS FROM INDIA
ON THEIR AD LIMINA VISIT**

Saturday, 5 May 1979

Dear Brothers in our Lord Jesus Christ,

IT IS A JOY for me to have this second visit, within such a short time, from a group of Bishops from India. I welcome you today, as I welcomed your brother Bishops last week, in the love of Christ.

As you gather in Rome for your *ad limina* visit, you seem to echo the sentiments expressed by all the Bishops of the Church as they assembled for the Second Vatican Council: "Coming together in unity... we carry in our hearts the hardships, the bodily and mental distress, the sorrows, longings, and hopes of all the peoples entrusted to us"[1]. On my part, I embrace, in you, all the beloved people whom you are called to serve.

It is my earnest hope that this visit will give you renewed vigour and strength for your pastoral labours, that you will experience gladness in knowing – in vividly realizing – that all your apostolic zeal is supported by the universal Church. It is shared by the Pope, as one who in the mystery of the Church represents "the chief Shepherd"[2], and endeavours to fulfil in his name a ministry of universal service. In particular, it is my desire to encourage you, my Brothers in the Episcopate – indeed, to confirm you in faith[3], not merely by words or actions, but in virtue of a charism implanted in the Church by her Founder, Jesus Christ, and activated by his Spirit. This, then, is the meaning of our meeting as we gather in unity, as we assemble in the celebration of our ecclesial and hierarchical communion.

I am aware through study, and now through our personal meetings, of a number of the issues that make up your daily solicitude on behalf of the Gospel. I am spiritually united with you as you face –

with courage, confidence and perseverance – the various obstacles that beset your ministry, and hinder you in your work of evangelization and service to humanity. With my prayer I follow you in your pastoral work, blessing in particular every initiative undertaken to increase the numbers of collaborators in the Gospel, every effort made to see that students for the priesthood are trained in authentic doctrine and holiness of life.

I express my deep interest in your catechetical programmes, in your education of the youth and in the youth apostolates, in your efforts to defend the sanctity of marriage and to consolidate the unity of God's people in faith and love, as well as to infuse a missionary consciousness into everyone.

I desire to be close to you, in fraternal understanding and shared concern, as you, on your part, strive to be close to your people in all their aspirations for human well-being and for the fullness of life in Christ. Be assured of my support for what is done in your local Churches – on the part of the clergy, religious and laity – to help the needy, the poor, the sick: to show solidarity, to enkindle hope, and to diffuse the love of Christ's heart. In all of this, Brethren, I am one with you in the holy name of Jesus.

With the passing of the years and in the face of the great issues of the modern world, as well as before the inscrutable designs of God's providence for the Church, we cannot but be more and more convinced with the Psalmist of a fundamental principle – the fact that "Our help is in the name of the Lord"^[4]. For us, as disciples of Christ, ministers of the Gospel and leaders of God's people, it is absolutely essential that this principle should become a whole attitude of mind and norm of conduct.

Our help is indeed in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! This luminous truth, dear Brothers, is of immense relevance, and it has direct bearing on all our pastoral activity, since all our activity is carried out under the sign of the holy name of Jesus, by the power of his grace, and for his glory alone.

The message that we proclaim is proclaimed in his name – in the name of Jesus, the Saviour of the world. Ours is a proclamation of salvation in him – salvation in his name. This truth is the explicit object of apostolic teaching, being proclaimed by the Apostle Peter under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. And today the Successor of Peter wishes to proclaim it anew, to you and with you and for you, and for your people: "There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given by which we must be saved"^[5].

It is in the name of Jesus that all our ministry is performed. Repentance and the forgiveness of sins are preached in his name to all nations^[6]. We ourselves have been washed and sanctified and justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ^[7]. Through faith we have "life in his name"^[8]. Moreover, the Holy Spirit himself has been sent to us by the Father in the name of Jesus^[9]. In a

ceaseless proclamation of Christ's universal mediation and in a solemn and explicit confession of his divinity, the prayer of all generations of Christians is presented to the Father: *per Dominum nostrum Iesum Christum Filium tuum*. In this name there is help for the living, consolation for the dying, and joy and hope for the whole world.

We are called to invoke this name, to praise this name, and to proclaim this name to our brethren. Our whole lives and ministry must be directed to the glory of this name. This attitude corresponds to the will of God; it is in deepest conformity with the Father's plan to constitute Christ as the head of the Church, "the first-born among many brethren"^[10], and the fulfilment of all creation. It is with profound conviction and deep love that the Church addresses her Redeemer with the words: *Tu solus sanctus, tu solus Dominus, tu solus Altissimus, Iesu Christe*. The effectiveness of our supernatural mission requires that we act always in the name of Jesus, precisely in order "that primacy may be his in everything"^[11].

In this way, dear Brothers, let us face obstacles, confront challenges, accept successes; let us do everything "in the name of the Lord Jesus"^[12]. And in word and deed let us exclaim: *Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam*^[13].

^[1] Message to Humanity, 20 October 1962.

^[2] *1 Pt 5* :4.

^[3] Cf. *Lk 22* :32.

^[4] *Ps 128* :4.

^[5] *Acts 4* :12.

^[6] Cf. *Lk 24* :47.

^[7] Cf. *1 Cor 6* :11.

^[8] *Jn 20* :31.

^[9] Cf. *Jn 14* :26.

^[10] *Rom 8* :29.

^[11] *Col 1*: 18.

^[12] *Col 3* :17.

[13] *Ps* 115 :1.

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