



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY TO GREAT BRITAIN

ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II TO THE LEADERS OF OTHER CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

Saturday, 29 May 1982

Dear brethern in Jesus Christ,

1. This meeting which the Lord has granted us today is one which I deeply appreciate. It is complementary to the service of prayer and praise in which we have just joined in Canterbury Cathedral, and is evidence of *the work of reconciliation to which we are all committed*. "All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us a ministry of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5, 18). "All this is from God" - it is his work we are seeking to do, his will we are trying to fulfil. By baptism and the degree of common faith we have just been celebrating in the Cathedral, he has already established between us a certain communion, a communion that is real even if it is limited. It is indeed a spiritual communion, "the fellow-ship of the Holy Spirit" (*Ibid.* 13, 13) whose coming on the Church we shall once again celebrate tomorrow.

2. But such communion in the Spirit cannot and must not remain something abstract. It has to find expression in the life of our Churches and communities; it has to be sufficiently visible to be even now a witness we give together to our will for Christian unity in a world that is so sadly divided, a world in which peace is imperilled from so many sides. For these reasons it is a joy for me to hear from you of your *hopes for the growth of Christians* in these countries *into deeper communion*, a growth to which through God's grace we are all committed, a growth which we all intend to foster whatever the difficulties we may experience. I have been so happy to learn of the cooperation of the Catholic Church not only with individual Churches and Communities but also with many of the initiatives of the British Council of Churches. I am also pleased to know of the relations of confidence between the Catholic Bishops and the leaders of other Churches and Communities which do so much to facilitate cooperation in evangelization in those areas in which this is already

possible.

3. You have spoken to me frankly of your hopes and of your problems. Clearly in a short and informal meeting like this we cannot discuss everything. It is my hope, and I am sure it is also yours, that our meeting this morning will not be the end of this fruitful exchange but rather a beginning. I would like to think that, before too long, some of you would be prepared *to visit Rome* together with some representatives of the Episcopal Conferences of Great Britain and to have further conversations with the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity and other offices of the Roman Curia. Thus, please God, we should be able to build further on the foundations so happily laid today.

4. Once more I thank you for your courtesy in coming to meet me. I realize that for this purpose you have left an important meeting organized by the British Council of Churches. When you return there, please assure all those taking part that *the Pope longs for the day* when, in fulfilment of Christ's will, we shall all be one - one with him and one with each other. God grant that that day may not be long delayed.

"Peace be to the brethern, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love undying" (*Eph. 6, 23-24*). Amen.

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