



The Holy See

PASTORAL VISIT IN AUSTRALIA

**RADIO MESSAGE OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE STAFF
OF THE "ROYAL FLYING DOCTOR SERVICE"**

Darwin (Australia), 29 November 1986

Good morning to all my listeners in outback Australia, and especially to those who make use of the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Dear Friends, 1. I am pleased to have this opportunity to address a brief but most cordial greeting to the staff of the Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia and to those who benefit from this extraordinary endeavour. It is a remarkable programme which provides professional medical assistance to the people of inland Australia. I stand in admiration of all the Flying Doctors, Flying Sisters and Flying Dentists who have served their brothers and sisters so generously in the vast central region of this country, beginning with the Reverend Robert Mitchell, the Presbyterian minister whose Christian vision gave rise to this charitable initiative. I recall, too, the creative contribution of Alf Traeger, who invented the pedal-radio; and the courage of the Reverend John Flynn, now more popularly known as "Flynn of the Inland", whose dream was to spread "a mantle of safety" over the people who live far from hospitals and medical help. 2. The whole story of the Royal Flying Doctor Service reflects some of the finest qualities of the Australian character. I am thinking of your courageous determination to face up to difficulties and to find ingenious ways of solving them. I am thinking for your great generosity in responding to people in need, no matter who they are, no matter where they live. Over the years, the service you offer has been greatly improved. The aircraft are far safer and more advanced. Modern electronic equipment has replaced the old pedal-radio. Yet the fundamental values with which you began have re-sustained you through the years: a faith-filled vision, a compassionate concern and a professional excellence. I congratulate all of you who are engaged in this great work. It is truly a mission of faith, hope and love. 3. Jesus told his disciples: "You are the light of the world... Your light must shine in the sight of men, so that, seeing your good works, they may give the praise to your Father in heaven". Certainly, this noble enterprise is a beacon of love and hope for the people of our day. It gives much praise and glory to our heavenly Father. I offer you my warmest encouragement and assure you of my prayers. May God sustain you day by day. And may he bless you abundantly with his gifts of peace and joy. © Copyright 1986 - Libreria Editrice Vaticana