



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
TO CHRISTIAN CHURCH LEADERS
OF KERALA AND SOUTHERN INDIA**

Friday, 16 June 1989

Dear Brothers in the Lord,

I am very pleased that your visit to Rome affords us this opportunity to meet in a spirit of fraternal esteem and mutual love. Your presence brings back happy memories of my Pastoral Visit to India three years ago, at which time I had an opportunity to meet many of you. It is a joy for me to see you again today.

Although we do not all share full ecclesial communion, we are conscious of the ecumenical responsibility that is ours as disciples of the Divine Master who prayed that all may be one (Cfr. *Jo.* 17, 21). All the baptized have a role to play in the great ecumenical movement towards the perfect unity which Christ willed for his Church. Both the faithful and their pastors are called to contribute to this task. It is my hope that your pilgrimage to the Church in Rome, including our meeting today, will strengthen you in perseverance, as well as prudence, in leading your people along the ecumenical path in India, especially in the beautiful land of Kerala.

An atmosphere of mutual respect and trust, not only between individual Christians but also between Churches and Communities as a whole, is necessary in order for progress to be made. Only on this basis can we hope to work together in the many areas where it is already possible to bear common witness to the Gospel. We must nurture within ourselves and within our Churches and Communities a desire for the gift of the Holy Spirit which will restore full unity among Christians.

Dear brothers, it is in this spirit that I join you in praying for the wisdom to discern the path towards unity and the courage to follow it. I also pray for all my Christian brothers and sisters in Kerala and

South India, both Catholics and those belonging to other Churches and Ecclesial Communities. May Almighty God pour forth his abundant blessings upon you all, and grant you his gifts of joy and peace.

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