



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY TO THE PHILIPPINES,
PAPUA NEW GUINEA, AUSTRALIA AND SRI LANKA

10th WORLD YOUTH DAY

***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING WITH DELEGATES
OF THE FEDERATION OF EPISCOPAL CONFERENCES***

*San Carlos Seminary of Manila
Sunday, 15 January 1995*

What I wrote, I wrote and what is written, is written, and may be read. What is meditated, should be revealed. And so my visit here in the Philippines, in Manila, it is for me an extraordinary experience. Of course, this visit is established after some deliberation. What the Pope received these days are all the words that say: "Papa dei giovani", "the Pope of the Youth". And so, he is still looking for the young people, how to meet them, how to stay close to them and so on. That is now how they call him: "Papa dei giovani" and also "Papa delle famiglie". But what I would like to underline in this moment is of the other nature. Perhaps, the present Pope will be called once the "Pope of the Synod", "Synodal Pope". But my intention is the fruit and the heritage of Vatican II. Vatican II reminds the Church, the Pope, all the Popes, all of us that Christ chose not only one but twelve and so, He created the first collegio, (collegiality), the first episcopal body, apostolic body, episcopal body.

And this apostolic body and episcopal body should invent and should look for global expressions of that body just as the Church did at the beginning. The first council was during the life of the Apostles, the apostolic council in Jerusalem and now we have the great councils and many synods of the first millennium, the first thousand years of the Church. They are so important for maintaining the tradition, the magisterium, the spirit, and the collegiality as such of the episcopal body. We owe so much to all these great synods, this synodal movement of the first millennium.

And Vatican Council II inspired a new synodal epoch, a new synodal era in the Church and that is the great thing about the end of the second millennium. I am convinced that it is necessary to return to this experience, the synodal experience of the Church.

Synodal experience is a very nice experience like the experience of the young people, the family experience, synodal experience. There is also the fact that we are meeting every five years for the "ad limina". We are meeting not only officially in an audience but we are meeting together in the chapel to celebrate the Holy Mass.

We are meeting at the table at the dining-room, having also the "cafe". And all that is collegiality. All that is synodal. What we need is to meet together sometimes as representatives of the whole Bishops collegium in the synod.

The general experience of the synodal Bishops is one form but we have also a more specific form of synodal experience. That is, for instance, last year, we had two kinds of synods of Bishops: the Synod of Africa, the continental synod and the other one was the general synod, the Synod for the Religious Life.

And so, I thought, I reflected about the need to organize as we are approaching the Third Millennium. I thought it could be useful to organize some continental session of the synod, like this African synod and like perhaps a Pan-American one and so also for Asia and the Far East and also for Australia. In other words, Australia and New Zealand, perhaps the Pacific Islands. It is necessary to look how to organize, how to assemble the Bishops according to the principles, the vital principles of culture, and of tradition and so on. So this is my thought, the fruit of my meditation this day. Yesterday, I meditated on another thing. I communicated that to the Bishops of Manila, of the Philippines, and today for the other Bishops. That is the fruit of my meditation.

The "synodal pope" is a good thing I would say. It means also to pray together more, to pray more in private and also to meet together more, to be at the table, at the dining-room. Maybe it is sufficient as an introduction for the next step which we have to do. The dining-room expects us. For this reason, I bless you! Maybe we can now pray the "Angelus Domini". It is the time for "Angelus Domini".

It was very nice yesterday at the "Radio Veritas" meeting.