



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS
POPE JOHN PAUL II
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION
OF THE MOST HOLY REDEEMER**

Monday, 15 December 1997

Dear Fathers of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer,

1. I joyfully extend my welcome to you who represent the entire spiritual family founded by St Alphonsus de' Liguori and who, after the recent General Chapter, wished to meet the Successor of Peter to renew your devotion to him and your sentiments of full communion.

I greet Fr Joseph William Tobin, the new Superior General, and I extend to him my best wishes for the difficult task to which he has been called. I thank Fr Juan María Lasso de la Vega, who during his years of service as the Supreme Moderator of the Redemptorists made every effort to lead the institute to an ever more conscious fidelity to the charism of the founder, the third centenary of whose death you recently celebrated.

In affectionately greeting each of you, I wish my cordial thoughts to be conveyed to all the Redemptorists, who work in the Church with generosity, skill and faithful adherence to the Gospel.

2. The anniversary of the birth of St Alphonsus was for your institute a fitting occasion to highlight how the radical option for the Gospel, fidelity to the Word of God, profound and sincere communion with the Church and solidarity with the poor led the great Doctor of the Church to create during his era a new style of evangelization. At the same time, his example and teaching confirmed the original timeliness of his message in today's Christian community, showing the path to follow even today, as we advance towards the third millennium.

He never ceased to emphasize how necessary it was to be faithful to the choices, the words and the style in which the Redeemer was the Gospel of God among men. In fact, in his Rule he always

recommended "following the example of Jesus Christ by preaching the Word of God to the poor", and he made himself an example and model for those who were carrying out the apostolic or pastoral ministry.

His "zeal for the house of the Lord" (cf. Ps 69 [68]:9) made him a teacher and witness for his many contemporaries, and his teaching continues today to nourish the thought and action of the Church.

His pastoral commitment, exercised with generosity and skill, drew vitality from the ardent and constant prayer that marked his life. From his intimate dialogue with the Source of Wisdom, he received the answers for enlightening, encouraging and comforting those who turned to him for guidance and support.

3. Dear brothers, the figure of your founder, always so timely, is a gift for the Church and a valuable encouragement for your Congregation, which is called to a renewed and enthusiastic adherence to Christ. By looking to him, you can work with greater generosity in the service of the new evangelization to which the whole Church is now committed. Certainly, the ways of proclaiming the Gospel must be constantly and courageously adapted to the concrete situations of the various contexts in which the Church lives, but this involves an even greater effort of fidelity to your origins, so that the apostolic style proper to your family may continue to respond to the expectations of the People of God. I know that this is the commitment that motivates you and I urge you to proceed with courage in that direction.

Be ready, dear friends, to carry out your mission among Christ's poor with renewed vigour, proclaiming the Gospel of hope and love to them.

May the Blessed Virgin, Mother of the Redeemer, whom you love with special affection, sustain you always and obtain for you abundant apostolic fruits.

With these sentiments and expressing again in the name of the Church my profound gratitude for your work in the service of the Gospel, I cordially impart my Blessing to you and willingly extend it to your entire institute.