



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER
POPE JOHN PAUL II
TO PRIESTLY FRATERNITY OF St PETER
AND PILGRIMS IN ROME
FOR RECENT BEATIFICATION**

Monday, 26 October 1998

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

1. Yesterday we celebrated the solemn beatification of Zefirino Agostini, Antônio de Sant'Anna Galvão, Faustino Míguez and Theodore Guérin. Three priests and a virgin, all founders of communities of consecrated life. With great joy today I greet you who have come from various parts of the world to take part in this festive event.

I cordially greet all those who have come on pilgrimage for the beatification of Fr Zefirino Agostini, and I extend a special welcome to the Bishop of Verona and to the other Bishops present. I would like to affectionately encourage the Congregation of the Ursuline Daughters of Mary, who are rejoicing that their founder has been raised to the honours of the altar.

In a situation fraught with material and spiritual difficulties on the outskirts of his native Verona, Fr Zefirino Agostini laboured in every way to further the human and Christian rehabilitation of the younger generations; he established ecclesial and social programmes to help the poor and less fortunate and directed the school of Christian doctrine with great dedication.

His zeal was sustained by constant prayer, especially before the Blessed Sacrament. He drew from continual dialogue with God the energy for his intense apostolate. May his teachings and his life inspire all who venerate him as blessed today.

2. It is with great pleasure that I greet the many Brazilian pilgrims who have come to Rome to take part in the solemn beatification of the first blessed born on Brazilian soil, Friar Antônio de Sant'Anna Galvão, also known as Friar Galvão. Guaratinguetá, his native town, must feel very happy that one of its sons has been raised to the honours of the altar. In Bl. Friar Galvão's home, the family would gather for prayers every night before the image of St Anne, and this drew his attention to the very poor who came to his house; years later, Friar Galvão was to draw thousands of the afflicted, the sick and slaves in search of comfort and light, so much that he became known as "*the man of peace and charity*".

Let us ask God that, through the example of Bl. Friar Galvão, the faithful observance of his religious and priestly consecration will serve as an incentive for a new flourishing of priestly and religious vocations, so urgently needed in the Land of the Holy Cross. May this faith, accompanied by the works of charity which transformed Bl. Friar Galvão into the sweetness of God, increase in God's children that peace and justice which only blossom in a fraternal and reconciled society.

3. I am pleased today to welcome the pilgrims who, accompanied by their Bishops, have come to Rome from Galicia, cradle of the new blessed, Faustino Míguez, and from the other regions of Spain, Latin America and Africa, where the Daughters of the Divine Shepherdess carry out the educational ideals of their founder.

Fr Faustino, simple and observant, soon discovered God as a friend who needed him to forge the courage of young people and to alleviate the suffering of the sick. An exemplary Piarist, all his apostolic and educational work was spurred by the pedagogy of love. Humility was his favourite virtue. In his long life he rejected every mark of distinction, since he wished only "to live hidden and to die unknown". Strong in adversity and firm in obedience, he hoped against all hope, knowing that God draws good from evil.

Dear brothers and sisters, the extraordinary witness of this religious is an invitation to everyone, especially the Calasanctian Sisters, to love deeply the work of education as an indispensable ecclesial service to the Gospel and a benefit to society.

4. Dear brothers and sisters, I warmly welcome the many English-speaking pilgrims present for the beatification of Mother Theodore Guérin. In particular, I extend a special greeting to the Bishops present and to the Sisters of Providence. Mother Theodore reminds men and women today to seek calm and comfort in the heart of Jesus and to draw strength from prayer. Society today is no less in need of the kind of dedication, wisdom and self-giving love which radiates from her life and work. I encourage you to honour her by imitating her. Through the intercession of Bl. Theodore Guérin, may you always walk in God's presence, seek his will and bear courageously all the trials which he may permit in your lives.

I am pleased to welcome the French-speaking pilgrims who have come to take part in the

beatification ceremony for Mother Theodore Guérin. May the Church in France and in French-speaking countries be inspired by her total trust in Providence to continue proclaiming the Gospel!

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5. I offer my cordial greetings to you, dear pilgrims who have wished to come to Rome for the 10th anniversary of the Motu Proprio *Ecclesia Dei*, to strengthen and renew your faith in Christ and your fidelity to the Church. Dear friends, your presence with the “Successor of Peter who has the chief responsibility for watching over the unity of the Church” (First Vatican Ecumenical Council, First Dogmatic Constitution *Pastor aeternus*) is especially significant.

In order to safeguard the treasure which Jesus has entrusted to her, and resolutely turned towards the future, it is the Church’s duty to reflect constantly on her link with the Tradition that comes to us from the Lord through the Apostles, as it has been built up throughout history. According to the spirit of conversion in the Apostolic Letter *Tertio millennio adveniente* (nn. 14, 32, 34, 50), I urge all Catholics to perform acts of unity and to renew their loyalty to the Church, so that their legitimate diversity and different sensitivities, which deserve respect, will not divide them but spur them to proclaim the Gospel together; thus, moved by the Spirit who makes all charisms work towards unity, they can all glorify the Lord, and salvation will be proclaimed to all nations.

I hope all the members of the Church will remain heirs to the faith received from the Apostles, worthily and faithfully celebrated in the holy mysteries with fervour and beauty, in order to receive grace ever more abundantly (cf. Ecumenical Council of Trent, session VII, 3 March 1547, *Decree on the Sacraments*) and to live in a deep and intimate relationship with the divine Trinity. While confirming the well-founded good of the liturgical reform desired by the Second Vatican Council and carried out by Pope Paul VI, the Church also shows her understanding for people “who feel attached to some previous liturgical and disciplinary forms” (Motu Proprio *Ecclesia Dei*, n. 5). The Motu Proprio *Ecclesia Dei* must be interpreted and applied in this perspective; I hope that it will all be lived in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council, in full harmony with Tradition, aiming at unity in charity and fidelity to the Truth.

It is on account of the “Holy Spirit’s activity, by which the whole flock of Christ is maintained in the unity of faith and makes progress in it” (Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen gentium*, n. 25), that the Successor of Peter and the Bishops, Successors of the Apostles, teach the Christian mystery; in a quite particular way, gathered in Ecumenical Councils *cum Petro and sub Petro*, they confirm and affirm the doctrine of the Church, the faithful heir to the Tradition now in existence for almost 20 centuries as a living reality that progresses, giving new energy to the ecclesial community as a whole. The most recent Ecumenical Councils — Trent, Vatican I, Vatican II — were particularly committed to explaining the mystery of faith and undertook the necessary reforms for the Church’s good, while being concerned for continuity with the apostolic Tradition, already noted by St

Hippolytus.

Therefore it is primarily the task of the Bishops, in communion with the Successor of Peter, to lead the flock with firmness and charity so that the Catholic faith is safeguarded everywhere (cf. Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Quinque iam anni*; [Code of Canon Law, can. 386](#)) and celebrated with dignity. In fact, according to the formula of St Ignatius of Antioch, “where the Bishop is, there is the Church as well” (*Letter to the Smyrneans*, VIII, 2). I therefore extend a fraternal invitation to Bishops to show understanding and renewed pastoral attention to the faithful who are attached to the former rite and, on the threshold of the third millennium, to help all Catholics live the celebration of the holy mysteries with a devotion that truly nourishes their spiritual life and is a source of peace.

Dear brothers and sisters, as I entrust you to the intercession of the Virgin Mary, perfect model of the *sequela Christi* and Mother of the Church, I impart my Apostolic Blessing to you and to all your loved ones. I cordially greet all the pilgrims who have come to Rome to the tombs of the Princes of the Apostles for the 10th anniversary of the Motu Proprio [Ecclesia Dei](#). I gladly impart my Apostolic Blessing to you and to all your loved ones.

I warmly welcome the English-speaking pilgrims who have come to venerate the tombs of the Apostles on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Motu Proprio [Ecclesia Dei](#). Upon you and your families, I invoke the almighty God’s abundant blessings.

6. Dear brothers and sisters, when you return home, bring your families and parishes the Pope’s greetings, together with my Apostolic Blessing, which I cordially impart to each of you and to your loved ones.

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