



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE SISTERS ADORERS
OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT**

Friday, 6 July 2001

Dear Sisters,

1. The providential circumstance of the XIV General Chapter of your Institute offers me the pleasing occasion to extend a cordial greeting to you, and to extend to all your sisters my grateful appreciation for the evangelical testimony given by your activity.

I greet, first of all, Rev. Sr Camilla Zani, Superior General, and the General Council, who helped her in the government of the religious family in the period just finished. I also wish to send an affectionate thought to all who in the various apostolic fields of your Congregation, benefit from the generous witness of the Sisters Adorers of the Blessed Sacrament. You are present in different parts of the world where impelled by the fire of charity, you put yourselves at the service of the Body of Christ, especially of his more needy and suffering members.

The ministry of mercy to the children of God afflicted by "old" and "new" forms of poverty is one of the characteristic elements of the presence of the Church in the third millennium. "As the unequivocal words of the Gospel remind us, there is a special presence of Christ in the poor, and this requires the Church to make a preferential option for them" (*Novo Millennio ineunte*, n. 49).

In this spirit, one sees the significance of your decision to focus the chapter assembly's reflections on the sharing of bread, of the Word and of the mission, after the example of Christ who seeing the hungry crowd that followed him, had compassion (cf. Mk 8,1-9).

Benefit of daily dialogue with the Lord in B.S.

2. How can the disciple of the Lord remain faithful to this vocation, if he does not cultivate an

enduring, daily dialogue of love with Him in listening to the Word of God, in prayer and in contemplation?

The specific charism that distinguishes your presence in the Church, as entrusted to you by your Founder is to adore "the Most Blessed Sacrament with the most ardent love" and to draw "from it the flame of charity towards your neighbour". This is not only a spiritual guideline but a precise program of life. In the Eucharist the Christian reaches the most complete spiritual intimacy with the Lord of life and with His help, is elevated to the contemplation of love in the very mystery of the Most Holy Trinity.

What contentment of soul (cf. Lk 9,17) is experienced in the intense hours passed in adoration before the Lord of history! With this eucharistic conscience, Bl. Spinelli recommended to you: "Walk in charity; let the fire of charity be finally set ablaze in your souls, love your God and put nothing, nothing as equal to or above Him" (*Circ.* 32).

3. I sincerely hope that all your communities know how to remember daily, in front of the Eucharist, this heritage which your Founder left you. Thus, strengthened by the power of the Bread of Life, you will know how to keep alive the flame of charity within each of your houses.

May your lives, like that of your Father, be constantly marked by love for Christ in the Eucharist, service to the poor, an icon of Christ, and the practice of an always generous forgiveness, the instrument of a more closely united community. May the Eucharist, the perfect memorial of the sacrifice of Christ, be the paradigm of your personal lives.

4. As you well know, your Founder's point of reference was the dual concept of the "manger" and the "cross". He was constantly inspired by the mystery of Bethlehem and Golgotha, especially in the tempestuous moments of his life. He taught you that "the manger and Calvary are the first and the last note, the first and the last page of that immense, divine, ineffable poem of love and sacrifice, that is the whole life of Jesus Christ" (*Circ.* 29).

Imitate his example and communicate the same ideal of holiness to all whom you meet. In this regard, you can appreciate the opportunities to meet and dialogue with laity which your collaboration with them offers you. In the Apostolic Exhortation *Vita consecrata* I observed that "today, often as a result of new situations, many Institutes have come to the conclusion that *their charism can be shared with the laity*" (n. 54), especially in front of the challenges of modernity. I concluded by saying that "these new experiences of communion and cooperation should be encouraged" (n. 55), within the bounds of prudence and the awareness of the distinction between vocations and tasks in the Church.

5. Dear Sisters! Be happy to have chosen as the purpose of your life remaining in intimate union with the Redeemer. May the energy you receive from the prolonged time in contemplation

before the Eucharist transform your lives into a daily oblation to Christ.

In the image of Mary, know how to meditate in your hearts the mystery of the Son (cf. Lk 2,51) and offer a testimony to all whom Providence leads you to meet. May the example and the intercession of Blessed Francesco Spinelli spur you to unite your sacrifices to that of Jesus, so that the world "may have life and have it abundantly" (Jn 10,10).

May you be accompanied in your daily efforts by the Blessing I impart to you who are present, to your sisters and to all those to whom your apostolic care is directed.