



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE PILGRIMS WHO HAD COME FOR THE BEATIFICATION
OF IGNATIUS MALOYAN, NIKOLAUS GROSS,
ALFONSO MARIA FUSCO, TOMMASO MARIA FUSCO,
ÉMILIE TAVERNIER GAMELIN, EUGENIA PICCO,
MARIA EUTHYMIA ÜFFING**

Monday 8 October 2001

*Dear Brothers in the Episcopate and in the Priesthood,
Men and Women Religious,
Brothers and Sisters in Christ,*

1. We are reliving in our hearts yesterday's solemn liturgical celebration which saw seven new Blesseds raised to the glory of the altars. I address warm greetings to all of you, dear pilgrims gathered in Rome for this happy event.

Above all, I would like to share with you and to entrust to the Lord the anxiety and concern that has been stirred up within us by this sensitive moment in international relations.

The family atmosphere of today's meeting gives us an opportunity to thank the Lord together for the new Blesseds and to reflect once again on their Gospel witness and the rich spiritual inheritance they have bequeathed to us.

2. Welcome, dear pilgrims who have come to Rome to take part in the beatification of *Archbishop Ignatius Maloyan*. I greet all the Bishops of the Armenian Catholic Church who have come here as well as the representatives of the civil authorities of Armenia. In particular, I extend a greeting to the young people, asking the Lord to make them courageous Gospel witnesses. During my recent visit to Armenia, I could gauge the attachment to the Christian faith testified by so many episodes of its history! This is borne out by the beautiful testimony left by Bl. Ignatius. A brave man with a

staunch faith, he focused his life and his ministry on the love of Christ. When the threat to the Armenian people became more menacing and he saw persecution looming on the horizon, after St Ignatius of Antioch's example he chose to follow Jesus to the very end and shed his blood for his brethren. His example invites all the baptized to remember that they have been immersed in Christ's death and Resurrection and must follow him every day.

I greet Cardinal Jean-Claude Turcotte and those who have come from Canada for the beatification of *Emilie Gamelin*, especially the Sisters of Providence. The new Blessed is a model for the men and women of today. One is always astonished by the fruitfulness of a life abandoned in the hands of God and that finds in contemplation the strength and daring for daily life and for the mission, receiving Jesus, in the image of Mary at the foot of the Cross, to live through him and for him alone.

Bl. Emilie's spiritual life gave her strength for her charitable mission; she emptied herself of all things and found the energy to comfort everyone. Taking her as your model, I encourage you to put yourselves at the service of the poor and of society's most underprivileged who are God's beloved, to alleviate their sufferings and thus make their dignity shine out.

3. I greet the German pilgrims with affection, especially the faithful from the Dioceses of Essen and Münster with their Pastors, Bishops Hubert Luthe and Reinhard Lettmann. Dear sisters, dear brothers, in the martyr Nikolaus Gross and in the Clemens-Sister Euthymia, your local Churches have received the gift of two new Blesseds. For your Dioceses, these exemplary Christians are a living advertisement. For this reason you must be proud of them. In these festive days spent in Rome, you have not merely achieved a goal; the beatification is actually also a beginning, for the new Blesseds invite people to follow in their footsteps in their homeland.

Blessed Nikolaus Gross teaches us to obey God rather than men. Our time urgently needs convinced Christians, who listen to the voice of their conscience and have the courage to speak out when it is a question of the transcendence of the human person. Sister Euthymia also has a timely message for us. Her life shows us that seemingly small things can be very important in God's eyes.

From the human viewpoint this sister was not a "star" in the limelight, but her silent work was a ray of light to many people that is still shining today.

May the example of both the new Blesseds be an incentive to you, and may their intercession accompany you all your life. I gladly impart my Apostolic Blessing to you.

4. In this atmosphere of deep joy I am delighted to express my most cordial congratulations to the *diocesan community of Nocera Inferiore-Sarno*, which has seen two of its priest sons raised to the

honours of the altar at the same time: Alfonso Maria Fusco and Tommaso Maria Fusco. They were not related but were brothers in the priesthood. Providence has now also linked them in the glory of the Blesseds in Heaven. I greet the pastor, Bishop Gioachino Illiano, and all of you, who have come in large numbers from the Diocese. I address the spiritual daughters of the two new Blesseds with special affection: the Sisters of St John the Baptist, and the Daughters of Charity of the Most Precious Blood. Dear sisters, your joy is also mine and that of the whole Church. I thank you for the prayerful and concrete fidelity which you have shown to the memory of your founders, whose example has now been solemnly recognized by the Church.

In his city of Angri, *Canon Alfonso Maria Fusco* was revered for his humble, simple spirit, which won for him affection and confidence. With the characteristic inner calm of saints that stems from absolute faith in God and his Providence, he managed to make the "dream" of his life come true: to found a women's congregation which would assist poor young people and provide them with an education. Today, the Sisters of St John the Baptist take his message to many parts of the world.

Bl. Tommaso Maria Fusco was also an apostle of charity. He responded to the Father's infinite love, made visible in the Most Precious Blood of Jesus, poured out as an effect of "his most tender love", with unconditional dedication of himself in the priestly ministry and in service to the little ones and the poor. Today his programme of life continues, thanks to you, dear Daughters of Charity of the Most Precious Blood, who make him present here and now in your daily activity.

5. I now address you, brothers and sisters who are rejoicing in the beatification of *Eugenia Picco*, who came from the Ambrosian Church and became the adopted daughter of the Church of Parma.

I affectionately greet the Pastors of your ecclesial communities, together with the Little Daughters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and with all of you, dear pilgrims who have come to pay homage to the new Blessed. In the congregation founded by Venerable Agostino Chieppi, she was a wise and prudent leader of her sisters, complying with the directions she received from the founder. Fully involved in the local Church, she made herself a mother to all, especially to the poor in whose tragedies, struggles and hopes she knew how to share. The experience of illness, especially in the last years of her life purified her soul. She can now teach everyone how to face difficult situations with the help of grace, how to serve the Church with the power of contemplation and how to approach brothers and sisters with the eagerness of charity.

6. Dear brothers and sisters, while we thank the Lord for the shining examples of holiness offered by the new Blesseds, let us renew to him our prayer for peace: "*Da pacem Domine in diebus nostris!* - Grant us peace, O Lord, in our days!".

May the Virgin Mary, whom the new Blesseds loved so tenderly, always guide and sustain us. I entrust all of you to her motherly protection, while I cordially bless you, together with your ecclesial and religious communities and your relatives and friends.

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