



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II TO THE CATHOLIC PATRIARCHS

Friday 26 October 2001

Venerable Patriarchs,

1. I am pleased to receive you on the occasion of the Synod of Bishops in which you took an active part. I am deeply grateful to you for your presence at the Synod which offers a particularly rich expression of the catholicity of the Church. You have made a precious contribution to it. The suggestions you have presented to me in writing will receive careful reflection, so I can draw from them what may contribute to a more effective presence of the Church in the world today.

I gladly take this opportunity once again to express my spiritual closeness to you in your trials, as well as to the peoples entrusted to your pastoral care. Let us pray together that the serious problems, which daily concern you, may find a ready and satisfactory solution. At this time, I think of the Holy Land, sanctified by the Redeemer's presence and preaching, Land in which He shed his blood for the world's salvation, and from which, risen, he sent out his Apostles into the world.

2. I assure you that every day I follow closely the events involving the peoples of the Middle Eastern region, and in communion with the whole Church, I pray daily that a lasting and honourable peace may dawn at last for everyone. At this meeting of intense fraternal communion, I ask you to greet in my name the clergy, consecrated persons and all the faithful.

I entrust each one to the special protection of the Mother of God, to whom your Churches are so intensely devoted. How many celebrations of her mysteries began in your lands and were later approved and accepted throughout the whole Church! May the Blessed Virgin Mary turn her motherly gaze upon your ministry and upon your beloved countries.

With these sentiments, I impart my Blessing to you, as a pledge of special affection.
