



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE EIGHTH MEETING

OF THE 10th ORDINARY COUNCIL

OF THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS Tuesday, 16 November

2004 Venerable Brothers in the Episcopate, 1. In our mutual joy at this meeting, I offer each and every one of you my heartfelt greetings for the renewed experience of episcopal communion in our concern for all the Churches (cf. II Cor 11: 28). I offer you my embrace of peace and brotherhood in the spirit of communion that makes us feel of one heart and mind (cf. Acts 4: 32). In particular, I greet Archbishop Eterovic, the Secretary General, and thank him for his kind words. As Members of the 10th Ordinary Council of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops, you are continuing to live and work in the native spirit of the Synod of Bishops, which is communion. When in 1965 Pope Paul VI, of venerable memory, was prompted to establish this provident institution, the Church was still immersed in the atmosphere of the Second Vatican Council in which the doctrine and spirituality of communion was progressively reborn with persuasive inner intensity. 2. The forthcoming 11th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops that you have for some time been carefully preparing for will address a topic crucial to the Church: the Eucharist. In fact, the theme of the Synod is: *The Eucharist, source and summit of the life and mission of the Church*. It is from the Eucharist that the Church draws vital energy for her presence and action in human history. In the Eucharist is found an exemplary prefiguration of communion between the faithful and their Pastors and of the collegial spirit among the Pastors of the particular Churches and the Pastor of the universal Church. It will certainly be the Eucharist that gives spirit and shape to this primordial, indispensable and diffusive character of the Church, a compact organic body that grows to the mature adulthood of Christ (cf. Eph 4: 13, 16). The upcoming Synod will once again afford a favourable opportunity for the Church to strengthen faith in and adoration of the mystery of the Eucharist, to renew collegial and hierarchical communion and to foster brotherly love. 3. Dear Brothers, not only does the preparatory phase of the 11th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, now at hand, coincide chronologically with the Year dedicated to the Eucharist, but there is also a special instance of reciprocity between the universal Church and the Synod itself. During this Year, the Church and the Synod are converging towards a single aim: the Lord Jesus, present, alive and life-giving in the sacrament of the Eucharist. The Encyclical *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* and the Apostolic Letter *Mane Nobiscum Domine* are entrusted to the Church so that Eucharistic procedures and doctrine may everywhere find souls ready for communion with the Lord and with their brethren in the mandate of love. One important task of the Church's Pastors is to be authentic teachers of communion (cf. *Pastores Gregis*, nn. 22, 44) so that the entire flock of the Lord may grow in the unity of the one body (cf. Eph 4: 3ff.), the spaces of pastoral charity be extended (cf. St Augustine, *PL*, 5, 440), and collegiality and hierarchical communion flourish for the holy fruit of the Spirit (cf. Gal 5: 22). May the Church, renewed in the rediscovery of the gift and mystery of the Eucharist, extend this inexhaustible richness of life to those near and far, in the urgent work of the new evangelization. On

these resolutions and especially on the preparations for the Synod, I invoke with you the protection of the Blessed Virgin, Mother of God and of the Church, of the Apostle St Peter and of all the Bishop Saints, while I cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing to you and to your beloved particular Churches.

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