



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC PILGRIMAGE
OF HIS HOLINESS OF PAUL VI
TO WEST ASIA, OCEANIA AND AUSTRALIA

MASS IN A VILLAGE NAMED LEULUMOEGA

HOMILY OF THE HOLY FATHER PAUL VI

*Pacific Ocean, Western Samoa
Monday, 30 November 1970*

Dear Sons and Daughters,

Here I am in your midst! I come from far away, from Rome, from the place where the great Apostles Peter and Paul and so many other saints and martyrs are buried; I come to bring you their blessing.

It is not a desire for travel nor any self-interest whatever that has drawn me to you. I come because we are all brothers and sisters; or, to put it another way, you are my sons and daughters and it is fitting that I, as father of the family that is the Catholic Church, should show each one that he has a right to equal affection. Do you know the meaning of «Catholic Church»? It means that the Church is for the entire world, that she is for all, that nowhere is she an alien. Each man, whatever his country, his race, his age or his education has a place in the Church.

How can I say such an astonishing thing? Because that is what Jesus Christ, the first-born of all men, has wanted. He is the Son of God, our Father, in heaven, and at the same time he is the Son of Mary, our sister, a human being like ourselves. It is he who saves us, it is he who is our teacher. He has sent me just as he sent your missionaries.

It is on behalf of Jesus Christ that these men and women of God have come to your islands. They have given you the same teaching that I bring; they were impelled by the same love as I have.

Missionary work in the name of which I am among you, began on the day of Pentecost and is still being carried on in our own day. It is always necessary and always urgent. There are still many men in the world who have not found the truth.

For want of someone to teach them, the seed that God has put in their hearts has not found soil where it could grow and flower to its full extent.

And so I have a favour to ask of you. It is this. Let us together send a message, I mean a letter, an invitation, to all the Catholics of the whole world. Let us tell them that there are still many people, many peoples indeed, who have not yet received missionaries, or else have received too few of them. Let us say that they must send new men and women missionaries here and to all the islands and all parts of the world that still do not know Jesus Christ. They are needed to preach the Gospel, and to baptize all who desire to become Christians. They are also needed to educate the people, to teach the children, to instruct the youth in what is good and beautiful, to labour, and to give your life the chance to grow and develop. They are to come in order to proclaim to all the duty to respect every human being, to show to all the way to live well, in justice and peace, and to recall to all who the Risen Christ is, and that we must love God and love all men.

Do you like this idea?

I give you this sheet of paper. On it is written the missionary message. We will all sign it. It will be the Catholic Message from the Missions of Samoa for the Missions of the whole world. The whole world will listen to you.

We, Paul VI,

- *With the Catholic community of the Island of Upolu*, gathered around its Bishop, Pio Taofinu'u, and its clergy;
- *With Our collaborators*, Cardinals Eugène Tisserant and Agnelo Rossi, Archbishops Giovanni Benelli, Agostino Casaroli and Sergio Pignedoli, and Bishop Jacques Martin;
- *Launch an appeal* that would be a call to the whole Church scattered to the four corners of the earth, from this privileged land, lost in the immensity of the Pacific Ocean, but long since open to the Gospel message;
- *Responding* to the anguished voices of those eager for light who beg us: «Come across and help us» (Cfr. *Act.* 16: 9);
- *Seized with pity* for the multitude hungry for the bread of the Word and the Bread of the Eucharist but with no one to give them these;
- *Filled with admiration* before the riches which God has placed in men's hearts and the wonderful promises of a harvest for the Gospel;
- *We repeat the call* which, from distant times, God has addressed to generous hearts: «Leave your country, your family and your father's house for the land I will show you» (*Gen.* 12: 1).
- *To you, bishops of the Holy Catholic Church*, who by virtue of the collegiality of the episcopate share the concern for the welfare of the whole Church (Cfr. *Lumen gentium*, 23), extend your apostolic ardour to the holy cause of spreading the Gospel throughout the world (Cfr. *Fidei donum*);

- *To you, priests,*

whose faith aspires to communicate itself on wider fields, come and bring the fire of your zeal to those whose simplicity of life has safeguarded their sensitiveness to the values of the spirit;

- *To you, religious,*

whose life is totally directed to imitation of the Lord, join the valiant generations of missionaries who for centuries have become, each in his turn, messengers of faith, peace and progress, by proclaiming Christ, their Model, their Teacher, their Liberator, their Saviour (*Ad gentes*, 8)

- *To you, young men and women,*

whose heart, eager for truth, justice and love, seeks noble causes to defend by disinterested effort, we say: Listen to the call to become heralds of the Good News of Salvation; come with the riches of your faith and your youthful enthusiasm, teach men that there is a God who loves them, who waits for them, and who wishes them to be close to him like children gathered round the head of the family; come to nurse the body, enlighten the intellect, teach how to live better and grow in humanity, and build the Church for the greater glory of God.

- *You who are rich,*

give of your possessions which God has placed in your keeping that the apostle may live and that his pastoral undertakings may prosper;

- *You who are poor,*

give your struggle and toil for your daily bread, that all may share that bread;

- *You who suffer, you who weep or are persecuted,*

give your suffering, that the Body of Christ may grow in justice and hope (Cfr. *Col.* 1: 23).

- *To the whole of Catholic Christendom*

we say: «Widen the space of your tent, stretch out your hangings freely» (*Is.* 54: 2); give the world, as it advances towards unity, the indispensable nourishment of harmony. For, while seeking the truth together brings men closer, only the meeting of hearts cements their unity. In the Spirit of Jesus Christ build up the immense Mystical Body which is the Church in process of being formed. It depends on you that peace and brotherhood should tomorrow scatter the darkness of death. God has need of you that about Christ the Saviour there should be raised and joined in harmony (*Eph* 2: 21) the hymn to the Creator, God who is Father of all (*Eph.* 4: 6).

Unknown brothers and sisters, listen to our voice. And the grace of the Lord be with you. Amen.