



The Holy See

JOURNEY TO INDIA

**ADDRESS OF PAUL VI
TO THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES
AND THE COMMUNITIES OF INDIA**

Thursday, 3 December 1964

My dear friends in Christ,

Our meeting together today is an occasion of both joy and significance. We rejoice in the fact that Our pilgrimage to Bombay has made it possible to greet the representatives of so many Christian Churches and communities of India. We rejoice too that our meeting takes place in an atmosphere of fraternal charity and mutual understanding which is a sign that the Holy Spirit has been working in a special way in the minds and hearts of all those who bear the glorious name of Jesus Christ. It is with joy that We express Our gratitude to God for His pouring out of the gifts of His Spirit, especially in these days. For if the divisions which exist among Christians are a cause of pain to all who desire to serve their Lord faithfully, the fact that so many initiatives have already been taken to repair these divisions is a source of joy and consolation. The Catholic Church also is taking her own proper initiative towards the reconciliation of all Christians in the unity of the one and only Church of Christ. We have emphasized this in a number of Our addresses and letters.

Most recently We solemnly reaffirmed this in the decree on Ecumenism which We, together with the Fathers of the Catholic Church gathered in Council, promulgated at the session of the Second Vatican Council which has just ended. However, the initiatives which We are taking are not to be made in isolation. Rather it is Our hope that Our efforts can accompany yours, can mingle with yours so that together, in humility and charity and mutual understanding, we can seek out the ways by which Christ's will «that all may be one» can one day be fully realized.

We are well aware that in our efforts to achieve renewal within the Catholic Church and sincere

dialogue with those who are not in full communion with her, We must remain faithful to the truth which We have received from the Apostles and Fathers of the Church. The pastoral office to which God has called Us particularly demands that. But We are also confident that fidelity to Christ and to His Gospel, which is the touchstone of all sincere ecumenical activity, will bring it about that God, Who will never be wanting to those who serve Him in love, will crown the efforts of all of us with blessings of true peace and reconciliation among Christians themselves, even as He has reconciled us to Himself in the Blood of His Son.

It is in the name of this divine Son that We have come as a pilgrim to the Eucharistic Congress in Bombay. It is in the name of the same Lord Jesus Christ that We thank you, the representatives of the Churches and communities of India, for coming to meet Us here. We send Our greetings to all your people and pray that God may bless you. May He bless also the efforts of all of you who are gathered here to study and work together in a spirit of fraternal understanding. We encourage these efforts and hope that they will be deepened and broadened in their outlook and results, confident that He who is the Lord of the Church will lead her to that fullness towards which, in the course of time, He wills His Body to grow and increase.