



Address of the Holy Father to the Ecclesia Dei Pilgrims Monday 26th Oct./98

I offer my cordial greetings to you, dear pilgrims who have wished to come to Rome for the 10th anniversary of the *Motu Proprio Ecclesia Dei*, to strengthen and renew your faith in Christ and your fidelity to the Church. Dear friends your presence with the 'Successor of Peter who has the chief responsibility for watching over the unity of the Church' (First Vatican Ecumenical Council, First Dogmatic Constitution *Pastor Aeternus*) is especially significant.

In order to safeguard the treasure which Jesus has entrusted to her, and resolutely turned towards the future, it is the Church's duty to reflect constantly on her link with the Tradition that comes to us from the Lord through the Apostles, as it has been built up throughout history. According to the spirit of conversion in the Apostolic Letter *Tertio millennio adveniente* (nn. 14, 32, 34, 50), I urge all Catholics to perform acts of unity and to renew their loyalty to the Church, so that their legitimate diversity and different sensitivities, which deserve respect, will not divide them but spur them to proclaim the Gospel together; thus, moved by the Spirit who makes all charisms work towards unity, they can all glorify the Lord, and salvation will be proclaimed to all nations.

I hope all the members of the Church will remain heirs to the faith received from the Apostles, worthily and faithfully celebrated in the holy mysteries with fervour and beauty, in order to receive grace ever more abundantly (cf. Ecumenical Council of Trent, session VII, 3 March 1547, Decree on the Sacraments) and to live in a deep

and intimate relationship with the divine Trinity. While confirming the well-founded good of the liturgical reform desired by the Second Vatican Council and carried out by Pope Paul VI, the Church also shows her understanding for people "who feel attached to some previous liturgical and disciplinary forms' (Motu Proprio Ecclesia Dei, n. 5). The Motu Proprio Ecclesia Dei must be interpreted and applied in this perspective.

It is the task of Bishops to safeguard the Catholic faith

It is on account of the 'Holy Spirit's activity, by which the whole flock of Christ is maintained in the unity of faith and makes progress in it' (Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium, n. 25), that the Successor of Peter and the Bishops, Successors of the Apostles, teach the Christian mystery; in a quite particular way, gathered in Ecumenical Councils cum Petro and sub Petro, they confirm and affirm the doctrine of the Church, the faithful heir to the Tradition now in existence for almost 20 centuries as a living reality that progresses, giving new energy to the ecclesial community as a whole. The most recent Ecumenical Councils - Trent, Vatican I, Vatican II -were particularly committed to explaining the mystery of faith and undertook the necessary reforms for the Church's good, while being concerned for continuity with the apostolic Tradition, already noted by St Hippolytus.

Therefore, it is primarily the task of the Bishops, in communion with the Successor of Peter, to lead the flock with firmness and charity so that the Catholic faith is safeguarded everywhere (cf. Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation Quinque iam anni; Code of Canon Law, can. 386) and celebrated with dignity. In fact, according to the formula of St Ignatius of Antioch, 'where the Bishop is, there is the Church as well' (Letter to the Smyrneans, VIII, 2). I therefore extend a fraternal invitation to Bishops to show understanding and renewed pastoral attention to the faithful who are attached to the former rite and, on the threshold of the third millennium, to help all Catholics live the celebration of the holy mysteries with a devotion that truly nourishes their spiritual life and is a source of peace.

Dear brothers and sisters, as I entrust you to the intercession of the Virgin Mary, perfect model of the sequela Christi and Mother of the Church, I impart my Apostolic Blessing to you and to all your loved ones.

I cordially greet all the pilgrims who have come to Rome to the tombs of the Princes of the Apostles for the 10th anniversary of the Motu Proprio Ecclesia Dei. I gladly impart my Apostolic Blessing to you and to all your loved ones.

I warmly welcome the English-speaking pilgrims who have come to venerate the tombs of the Apostles on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Motu Proprio Ecclesia Dei. Upon you and your families, I invoke the almighty God's abundant blessings.

Dear brothers and sisters, when you return home, bring your families and parishes the Pope's greetings, together with my Apostolic Blessing, which I cordially impart to each of you and to your loved ones.

English translation by Peter Vere, Una Voce Canada copyright 1998, Una Voce America