

ASSUMPTION CHURCH
323 W. Illinois
Chicago, Ill. 60610

JOHN PAUL II

Addresses and Homilies
given in
BRAZIL

Translation by
National Catholic News Service

JOHN PAUL II



In the midst of the anxieties and uncertainties and—why not say so!—of the sufferings and bitterness of the present, Brazil will be able to show itself a country that will have much to offer tomorrow to the glad community of nations.

Please God that this progress may give Brazil to build up an exemplary form of social co-existence, by overcoming prejudices and inequalities, by justice and concord, with faith and courage, without pride and ruptures. Such will certainly constitute an outstanding contribution to international peace, and thereby to mankind.

ADDRESSES TO THE PEOPLE OF BRAZIL

Copyright 1980. Publications Office, United States Catholic Conference, 1312 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005. Translations of Pope John Paul II's addresses, speeches, homilies used by arrangement with National Catholic News Service.

A15885
BIZ 1.1

"I come because this country with its immense majority of Catholics evidently bears within it a special calling in the contemporary world and in the concert of the nations."

REMARKS ON ARRIVAL IN BRAZIL

Brazilia. June 30, 1980

Your excellency, Mr. President of the Republic, your eminences, your excellencies, archbishops and bishops, most dear friends,

1. It was not without great and profound emotion that I just now kissed the good and generous soil of Brazil. This gesture has been repeated 13 times, for that is the number of countries that I have had the pleasure of visiting as pope. I kissed this soil with the fervor and spontaneity that enters into something that is being done for the first time, hence my emotion is that of an act performed for the first time. It is meant to show early, silent gratitude for the welcome that this country is giving me. A thousand more and less evident signs make me feel that this welcome is charged with warmth and affection.

I would once again express in words my gratitude for this welcome. Its quality is reflected wonderfully in the words that you, Mr. President, have just addressed to me, in your own name but also in the name of the whole of the noble Brazilian people. My gratitude goes out to all those here who in various ways represent this nation and its people.

2. This visit to Brazil now beginning has been a long pondered dream. I desired to get to know this land for many different reasons. It pleased Divine Providence to permit me to make this visit, in response to the fraternal invitation extended to me by the Brazilian episcopate, as well as to the respectful invitation made by the president of the Republic of Brazil, and this invitation was warmly seconded by all the Brazilian people. Innumerable letters reaching me over recent months well showed this. May the Lord of history be blessed and thanked for the joy that he is granting me. I trust that the joy may be yours as well.

3. I am here on a purely pastoral and religious mission. God's mysterious and loving designs appointed me to be bishop of Rome, successor of the Apostle Peter, and so vicar of Christ and visible head of his church. I feel as addressed to myself that tremendous yet comforting command to strengthen my brother bishops in their mission (cf Lk 22,32), and, like them, to strengthen the children of the Catholic Church in intrepid and radiant faith. That is, faith as shall lead them to give witness to the world of the reasons for their hope in Christ (cf. 1 Pt.3,15), and to communicate the unfathomable riches of Christ's love to the world (cf. Ef. 2,7). This is the purpose in the visits that I am making to various countries and continents. Because of it these visits may be called pastoral visits or missionary pilgrimages.

4. Why Brazil today? You, Mr. President, have already mentioned a number of reasons in your

delicate remarks. Above all because your land came to birth in the shadow of the cross, it was baptized with the name of True and Holy Cross. Then it was nourished with the first Eucharist, celebrated at Porto Seguro, and it became the nation with the largest number of Catholics in all the world. The church grew and gained strength here so much as to be today a reason for joy and hopefulness throughout the Catholic world. My visit is intended as an act of homage to this church and to encourage it to be evermore the sacrament of salvation, performing its mission within the framework of the universal church. To whom God gives much, much shall be asked (cf. Lk 12,48).

In the second place, I come because this country with its immense majority of Catholics evidently bears within it a special calling in the contemporary world and in the concert of the nations. In the midst of the anxieties and uncertainties, and — why not say so? — of the sufferings and bitterness of the present, Brazil will be able to show itself a country that will have much to offer tomorrow to the grand community of the nations.

Please God that this prospect may spur Brazil to build up an exemplary form of social co-existence, by overcoming imbalances and inequalities, in justice and concord, with light and courage, without shocks and ruptures. Such will certainly constitute an outstanding contribution to international peace, and thereby to mankind.

It is not too much if he whose mission includes an important aspect of construction of peace should offer encouragement in this matter. I rejoice

that a series of events has served as the mold for this visit. I rejoice together with you at the honor of the altar that has been conferred upon a pioneer of evangelization of your people, Blessed Joseph de Anchieta.

Together with you I adore the most blessed Eucharist in connection with the tenth National Eucharistic Congress, which I shall inaugurate at Fortaleza in a few days. Together with you I express my filial devotion to the mother of God in her majestic shrine of Aparecida. Together with you I give thanks for the existence of the Latin American Episcopal Conference, founded 25 years ago in Rio de Janeiro.

5. Your religious history — and often your history as a nation — was written by heroic, dynamic and virtuous missionaries. It has been continued by the dedication of devoted servants of God and men, God's brethren. All have left deep traces in the Brazilian soul and civilization. Through this rapid mention the pope desires to render a homage of gratitude to all of them, in the church's name.

The history of the church in Brazil is so intimately bound up with the history of the country that your nation is seen to be marked above all by fidelity to Christ and to his church.

6. I hope, desire, and pray to God that my visit may serve as stimulus to increasing consolidation of the church, the community of salvation among you, to the benefit of all Brazilians and the universal church!

My journey of faith is meant to be as well a pilgrimage towards meeting with man, human persons. I therefore at this moment embrace — at least in the spirit — every person living in this Brazilian fatherland. I would like to be able to talk with each and every one of you all, beloved children of Brazil. I would like to visit each family, to get to know all the states and territories, to go to see all ecclesial communities of this great and beloved nation. How many insistently invited me to do so!

You will certainly understand that this will not be possible. So, as I tread this Brazilian soil for the first time, my thoughts and my amity go out, through those that stand here, to those that are not here but who wish that they were here. My thoughts go to all those that are prevented from participating at meetings with the pope by family duties, by work, by ministries or the apostolate, by reasons of poverty, illness or age. The pope is thinking of each one. He loves all and to all he sends a very Brazilian greeting: “um abraço!” (an embrace).

Together with this gesture of friendship may you receive my prayers for your happiness: May God bless your Brazil. God bless you all, Brazilians, with peace and his prosperity, and serene concord in comprehension and fraternity. Under the maternal gaze and the protection of Our Lady of Aparecida, patron of Brazil!



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2016

"The trips that I am taking...have a specific apostolic character and strictly pastoral objective, but in addition to this religious character, they carry also a message specifically about man, his values, his dignity and his social life."

ADDRESS TO BRAZILIAN PRESIDENT
JOAO BAPTISTA DE FIGUEREDO
Brazilia. June 30, 1980

Mr. President,

May my first word to you be to express my profound gratitude to your excellency. And I want to express this gratitude using one of the first expressions that I learned in my recent study of the Portuguese language and which has for me a special meaning: "Muito obrigado" (many thanks).

Many thanks for the generous welcome affirmed and demonstrated since your excellency became aware of my intention to accede to the wishes of my brother bishops of Brazil that I visit this country.

Many thanks for the kind presence of your excellency at the airport at the moment in which I stepped on Brazilian soil and for the kind words you have just spoken to me. I ask that you consider them directed not just to me, but to the mission which has been invested to me and to the universal church, of which I am pastor.

The trips that I am taking, following the initiative of my predecessors, above all Paul VI, constitute a

very important aspect to me of my pontifical ministry and of the pastoral governance of the church.

They have a specific apostolic character and strictly pastoral objective, but in addition to this religious character, they carry also a message specifically about man, his values, his dignity and his social life.

I come, therefore, to meet with the church of Brazil, with the Catholic community that constitutes the great majority of the population of this vast and populous nation. But I also come wishing to meet with all the beloved people of Brazil.

Thus, this meeting is with almost half a millenium of human and religious history. In this history there is certainly the inevitable lightness-darkness that is found in the history of every people. May God give his help so that light prevails always over the shadows. In the historical profile of this illustrious nation, I want to emphasize three points:

— The well-known Brazilian ecumenism, which has been capable of integrating peoples and values of diverse ethnic backgrounds, which surely contributed to the characteristics of openness and universality of the culture of this country.

— Evangelization, which was done in such a way and with such continuance that it left profound marks on the lives of this people, providing without doubt, to the degree to which this fits in the mission of the church, principles, norms and moral and spiritual energies which shaped the human and national community.

— The youthful energy of the population, with its respective traditions and diverse qualities, surely guarantees that the nation will overcome the obstacles that will be found in its historic course, leading to a better tomorrow.

Evangelized since the beginning, the Brazilian people have lived the faith and the message of Christ, certainly not without problems, but with a sincerity and simplicity clearly attested to by its traditions, in which can be seen glimpses of options, interior attitudes and behavior in fact Christian.

In addition to this, as your excellency had the kindness to mention, there are many ties that link Brazil to the Apostolic See in Rome, distinguishing a century and a half of friendly official relations, uninterrupted and ever more solid with the passing of time.

They have a guarantee of authenticity in the love and devotion of the Brazilians to the vicar of Christ. The warmth of the reception which is given me here is an expression of this.

Mr. President, honorable members of the Congress, the Senate, the Supreme Court, the ministers of state, ladies and gentlemen:

With your honorable presence here on my arrival and now in this meeting you wanted to honor the pastor of the universal church, an honor for which he is extremely appreciative: "Muito obrigado" once again to each one of you personally.

I want to take this opportunity to express the highest esteem for the noble mission you carry out. The mandate you have received, confers on you the privilege — that is also an obligation — to

serve the common good of the whole nation, serving the Brazilian people. May God help you always to fulfill this mandate.

In my apostolic pilgrimages throughout the world I also want, with the help of God, to be the bearer of a message and collaborate in the humble but indispensable way which is my part so that an authentic meaning of man prevails in the world, not confined in strict anthropocentrism, but open to God.

I have a vision of man that has no fear in saying: Man cannot abdicate from himself, nor from the place to which he belongs in the visible world. Man cannot become a slave to things, to material riches, to consumerism, to economic systems or to that which he himself produces. Man cannot be made a slave to anyone or to anything.

Man cannot eliminate the transcendental — in the last analysis, God — without cutting himself off from his total being. Man in the end will only be able to find light for his own “mystery” in the mystery of Christ.

How beneficial would it be for the world if there were an understanding of man from this truth, as the only one capable of giving a human dimension to the diverse initiatives of daily life — political, economic, social, cultural, etc. Rapidly this would become a base for programs of the “true civilization,” which can only be a “civilization of love.”

Attending to its proper mission and with clear respect for the legitimate institutions of the temporal order, the church can only be pleased with all that is honest, just and valid which exists

in those institutions for the service of man. It can only see with satisfaction the efforts to save and promote the fundamental rights and liberties of all human persons and ensure these responsible participation in the social and community life.

For this very reason the church does not cease to proclaim the reforms needed for the safety and promotion of those values without which no society worthy of the name can prosper, that is, reforms that have in view a more just society and are in accordance with the dignity of the human being.

Thus, it urges those responsible for the common good, above all those who call themselves Christians, to undertake in a timely way those reforms, with decision and courage, with prudence and efficiency, which are based on Christian criteria and principles, objective justice and an authentic social ethic.

Thus, promoting such reforms is also a way of avoiding their being looked upon as only impulsive, in which no hesitation is made in using violence and the direct or indirect suppression of the rights and fundamental, inseparable liberties of the dignity of man.

Wishing the dear Brazilian people an always growing fraternity based on an authentic sense of man, with liberty, equality, respect, generosity and love among all its members, and with a lucid and solid opening for humanity and for the world, I wish you a safe and secure peace, based on mutual work and the striving of all for progress and well being.

I wish you also the sufficient and indispensable goods for the development of the human person. I ask God that each Brazilian of birth or adoption

respect and always see respected the fundamental rights of all peoples. To proclaim and defend these rights, without setting them before the rights of God or silencing the obligations that correspond to them, is a constant of the life of the church in virtue of the Gospels which are entrusted to it.

Thus, do not cease to invite all men of good will and encourage their children to the respect and cultivation of these rights — the right to life, to security, to work, to a home, to health, to education, to religious expression, both private and public, to participation, etc.

Among these rights it is impossible not to mention as a priority the right of parents to have children as they wish, receiving at the same time what is needed to educate them in dignity, and the right of bearing life.

We know how many of these rights are being threatened in our days in the whole world.

I heartily bless what is done here in communion with universal efforts, which can only be for the benefit of the poorest and most marginalized persons afflicted by the undeserved frustrations of which they are victims.

In this sense, it is never too late to remember that never has a transformation of political, social or economic structures been consolidated, if not followed, by a sincere "conversion" of the mind, the will and the heart of man, with all its truth.

This has to happen, taking into account, on the one hand, the avoidance of pernicious confusions between liberty and instinct, of self-interest, of fighting or of domination, and, on the other hand,

the creation of solidarity and fraternal love which are immune to any false autonomy in relation to

In this line of thinking, all of society is coresponsible. But initiatives and the human direction and logic of the processes depend in large part on those who are invested with positions of government and of leadership.

It depends on its original task of renewing and forming attitudes with adequate, constant and patient processes of education and of utilizing good will, always enlightened by the "certainty that it is" man, the final beneficiary of his responsibilities and worries, as you wrote to me a while ago, your excellency.

The particular qualities of the Brazilian people, united with your long Christian tradition, will bring you to respond with certainty to the call and the challenge of the third millenium which approaches and the communion of minds and hearts in the search for the common good.

Clarified, proposed and generated by the leaders, and with corresponding free, educated and joint participation of all, you must continue to serve man and the supreme good of peace in this great nation, in this continent and in the world.

Reiterating my gratitude to your excellencies for the reception and all the attention, I ardently wish for God's abundant blessings on Brazil through the intercession of Our Lady of Aparecida, your patron saint.

“The diplomatic way is a way of wisdom in the sense that it is based on the ability of people of good will to listen to one another, to understand one another, to find negotiated solutions, to progress together instead of coming to confrontations.”

ADDRESS TO DIPLOMATIC CORPS

Brazilia. June 30, 1980

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

On this first day spent in the Brazilian capital I am very happy to meet with the heads and members of diplomatic missions accredited to the government of this country. I heartily thank you for coming this evening for this appointment with the pope, who himself has representatives in most of your countries.

In expressing to each and every one of you my cordial greetings, I think also of all the nations of which you are sons and daughters and which you represent in Brazil. And to all the people dispersed throughout the American continent and in the other continents I express my esteem and the sincere best wishes of the church which calls itself Catholic, that is to say universal, open to all human societies for whom it wishes the original blossoming, thanks to the development of that which is best in their countries, in their culture, in human beings themselves.

Your task as diplomats takes place through the noble means which lead to reconciliation of peoples, to their reciprocal esteem and understanding, to their exchanges, to their cultural or economic collaboration, in a word to peace.

The diplomatic way is a way of wisdom in the sense that it is based on the ability of people of good will to listen to one another, to understand one another, to find negotiated solutions, to progress together instead of coming to confrontations. Today more than ever the problems of peace, security and development are not limited to bilateral relations: there is a complex whole in which every country must make its contribution to the betterment of international relations, not only to avert conflicts or diminish tensions but to present a united front before the great problems of the future of humanity which concern us all.

And here one hopes that every man or woman, particularly the leaders of nations and then their representatives, may aid the convictions, the principles, likely to promote the true good of persons, of peoples, within the international community. It is to this which the Holy See wishes to witness in bringing to the level of consciences its own specific contribution.

In the limits of this brief meeting I am able only to evoke the principles of peace within and peace outside a country. It may seem banal to emphasize that each country has the duty to preserve its peace and security within. But it must in any case "deserve" that peace by assuring the common good of all and the respect of rights. The common good of a society requires that it be just. Wherever justice is lacking, the society is threatened from

within. This does not mean that the transformations necessary to bring about a great justice must be based on violence, revolution or bloodshed, because violence prepares a society of violence and we Christians cannot agree to that. But it does mean that there are social transformations, sometimes profound, to be realized constantly, progressively, with effectiveness and realism, through peaceful reforms.

All citizens take part in this duty, but obviously it is a particular responsibility of those who exercise power, because theirs is a service of social justice. Power has the right to demonstrate itself strong vis-a-vis those who cultivate an egoism of one group to the detriment of the whole. It must in any case demonstrate itself to be at the service of men and women, of each man and woman and especially those who need sustenance. The church, on its part, will work without rest to bring to mind its concern for "the poor," for those who are disadvantaged in any way. In any case power must not be permitted to violate the fundamental rights of man, and I do not need to enumerate here those which I have often mentioned, particularly in my speech of Oct. 2 of last year before the United Nations.

Vis-a-vis the other countries, one must grant to every nation the right to live in peace and security on its own soil without being subjected to unjust external threats, which may be of a military, economic or ideological order. On this most important point all men of good will must achieve unanimity and, I dare say, especially the diplomats. But non-interference is not enough,

because it would mean indifference to the type of people whom nature or historical circumstances have disadvantaged to the point that today a great number of their sons and daughters lack the minimum necessary for a worthy human life in the matter of bread, health or education. There is an international solidarity of promotion. It is talked about a lot, but the realization is too restricted or aggravated by conditions from which the weight of new threats come. Peace, here, calls for a joint development, and not for the accumulation of weapons of fear nor the push for revolt, as I said recently at UNESCO.

We must constantly set out before this world duty of peace in justice and development to find the words and gestures which, little by little, may build a world worthy of the human being, that world which God wants for men and women, and of which he has given them responsibility, enlightening their consciences. It is the faith that I have in you, dear diplomats, which moved me to share with you this ideal. May God inspire you and bless you. May he bless your families. May he bless and protect your homelands. May he guide the international community on the road to peace and brotherhood.

"...the church assumes a commitment of continuously announcing to the youth a message of total liberation and a message of salvation that she has heard from the mouth of the Savior himself..."

HOMILY TO YOUTH

Belo Horizonte. July 1, 1980

Dear youth and my friends,

You will not be surprised that the pope begins this homily with a confession. I had already read many times that half of your country's population is less than 25 years of age.

Contemplating since my arrival in Brasilia and wherever I went an infinity of youthful faces, upon arrival in this city, passing between thousands of young people, seeing you young people so numerous around this altar, I confess that I understand better, from this specific point, something which I had understood only in an abstract way.

I believe I understand better also because the bishops at Puebla spoke of a preferential, but not exclusive, option, a priority for youth.

This option signifies that the church assumes a commitment of continuously announcing to the youth a message of total liberation and a message of salvation that she has heard from the mouth of the Savior himself, which should be spread with total fidelity.

2. At this Mass I have the happiness of celebrating in your midst and for your intentions,

this message appears with its essential meaning in the readings that we hear.

"Observe what is right, do what is just" (Is. 56, 1).

The prophet Isaiah exhorts us with a force that never tires from a distance of 2,500 years. And he adds that it is important above all to be strong in the alliance that God sealed with man. It is an invitation to coherence and fidelity, an invitation that touches the young very closely.

In the letter of Paul to the Corinthians is a fine and convincing word, as was the habit of the great apostle, "No one can lay a foundation other than the one that has been laid, namely Jesus Christ (cf 1. Cor. 3, 11).

He knew well what he was saying, this Paul, who when young had persecuted his church. But on the road to Damascus one beautiful day there was the unexpected meeting with this same Jesus. And it was the witness of his own life that made him say, "There is no other foundation possible. It is urgent to place Jesus as the foundation of existence."

And in the Gospel of St. Matthew is the page that no one rereads without emotion. "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" (Mt. 16, 13) asked Jesus of the apostles and, after they had given him several replies, the deeper question, ' Who do you say that I am?" (Mt. 16, 15).

We all know it is not sufficient to speak of Jesus, repeating what others say. It is necessary to say what you think. It is no longer sufficient to recite an opinion. It is necessary to give witness, feel committed by the witness given and often to the extreme of this witness.

The best friends, followers and apostles of Christ always were those who perceived one day within themselves the final irrefutable question, before which all the others became secondary and derivative: "Who do you say that I am?"

The life, destiny, history and future of the young depend on the clear and sincere answer, without rhetoric or subterfuge, that they can give to this question. It has already transformed the lives of many youths.

3. And it is from the message offered from the word of God that I would like you to take this simple message that I leave you at this encounter, that will allow me to feel the seriousness with which you face your existence.

You are the great richness of this immensely rich country. The real future of this country is present in you. Thus, this country, and with it the church, looks to you with an expectant and hopeful eye.

Open to the social dimensions of man, you will not hide your will to transform radically the structures that present injustices in society.

You rightly say that it is impossible to be happy while seeing the multitude of brothers who lack the minimum opportunities for a human existence. You also say it is indecent for some to have in excess what is missing on the table of the rest.

You are committed to constructing a just society, free and prosperous, where each and every one can use the benefits of progress.

4. I lived in my youth with these same convictions. I proclaimed them as a young student

through the voice of literature, the voice of art. God willed that they received their coloring in the fire of a war whose atrocities did not spare my home.

Many times I saw these convictions trampled upon. I feared for them, seeing them exposed to the tempest. One day I decided to confront them with Jesus Christ. I thought I was the only one to rebel against their real content and value, protecting them against I don't know what inevitable erosion.

All this, this tremendous and valuable experience, taught me that social justice is only true if based on the rights of the individual. And these rights to be really recognized must be recognized for the transcendental dimension of man, created in the image and likeness of God, called to be his son and the brother of other men and destined to eternal life.

To negate this transcendence is to reduce man to being an instrument of domination whose fate is subject to the egoism and ambition of other men or to the omnipotence of a totalitarian state created as the supreme value.

In my inward self that led me to the discovery of Jesus Christ that carried me unrestricted to him. I perceived what the Second Vatican Council stated clearly.

I understood that "the Gospel announces and proclaims the freedom of the sons of God and rejects all bondage resulting from sin, it scrupulously respects the dignity of conscience and its freedom of choice, it never ceases to encourage the employment of human talents in the service of God and the well being of man and,

finally, it commends everyone to charity for all. This is nothing other than the basic law of the Christian scheme of things" ("Gaudium et Spes," n. 41).

5. I learned that a Christian youth ceases to be young, and there are many who are not Christian, when they are seduced by doctrines or ideologies that preach violence and hate.

One does not build a just society on injustice. You do not build a society that deserves the title of human by not respecting or, worse yet, destroying human liberty, denying to the individuals the most fundamental liberties.

Sharing as a priest, bishop and cardinal the lives of many young people in universities, in youth groups, in excursions to the mountains, in prayer circles and reflexions, I learned that the young dangerously begin to age when they are fooled by the adage, "The end justifies the means," when they believe that the only hope of bettering society is by promoting fighting and hatred between social groups in the utopia of a society without classes that soon leads to the creation of new classes.

I convinced myself that only love approaches that which is really different and reaches together in diversity the word of Christ, "This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you" (Jn. 15, 12).

It came to me then, besides its unparalleled theological profoundness, as the seed and principle of the only radical transformation to be appreciated by a young person, as the seed and principle for the only revolution that does not betray man. Only true love builds.

6. If the youth that I was, called to live my youth in a crucial moment in history, can say anything to the youth that you are, I think I can say, "Don't become an instrument. Search out, being conscious of what you want and what you do. But I see that this same thing was said by the bishops of Latin America, meeting in Puebla last year:

"We will inculcate in young people a critical-minded attitude toward...the cultural counter-values that various ideologies try to impart..." (Puebla document, n. 1197), especially the ideology of a materialistic character, so that they are not manipulated.

And Vatican II says, "The social order requires constant improvement: it must be founded in truth, built on justice and enlivened by love: it should grow in freedom towards a more humane equilibrium" ("Gaudium et Spes," 26).

A great predecessor of mine, Pope Pius XII, adopted as his motto, "Build Peace in Justice." I think that is a motto and above all a commitment worthy of you, Brazilian youth.

7. I fear that many good intentions for building a just society swim in inauthenticity and are emptied like a soap bubble lacking the support of a serious attempt at austerity and frugality.

In other words it is indispensable to know how to win against the temptation of the so-called consumer society, the ambition of having more in place of trying to be more, the ambition of having more while others have less.

I think in this respect the beatitude which speaks of the poor in spirit has a definite force and relevance in the life of each youth; the wealthy

young man will then learn what is superfluous and what is almost always lacking for others so that he will not leave (the Lord) in sadness (Mt. 19, 22) when he realizes in the innermost part of his conscience that the Lord is asking for fuller renunciation.

May the youth who lives in rough contingency and uncertainty regarding tomorrow, perhaps even in hunger, and who is looking for the legitimate improvement in conditions for himself and others be attracted by dignity but not by ambition or fascination with the superfluous.

My friends, you are also responsible for the conservation of those values which have always honored the Brazilian people. Do not be carried away by the exaggeration of sex that violates the authenticity of human love and leads to the deterioration of the family.

“Are you not aware that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?” (1 Cor. 3, 16) wrote St. Paul in the text we heard.

The young woman should look to find true feminism, the authentic realization of woman as a human person, an integral part of the family and society in a conscious participation, following her nature.

8. I reread, finishing the key words that we took from the reading for this Mass:

- Observe what is right and do what is just.
- Do not build on any foundation except Jesus Christ.

- Have an answer to give our Lord when he asked, “For you, who am I?”

This is my sincere and confident message as a friend. My wish would be to shake the hands of each one of you and talk to each of you. In any case and to each one, I say to all, youth of Belo Horizonte and of all Brazil, the pope wishes you well, the pope will never forget you. The pope leaves here with a wonderful memory of you.

Receive my dear friends, the apostolic blessing that I am going to give you at the end of the Mass as a sign of my friendship and confidence in you and to all the youth of this country.

“I pray that this spirit of family shall never come to be weakened or perish. That it may prevail over any seed of discord or division whatever, over any threat of rupture or separation.”

HOMILY AT MASS FOR FAMILIES

Rio de Janeiro. July 1, 1980

My very dear brother, archbishop of Sao Sebastiao do Rio de Janeiro and your auxiliary bishops,

Dear children living in this wonderful city, dear children come from other parts of Brazil for this meeting:

1. Many of those who are at this hour partaking in this Eucharist will be going in their hearts' memories back to other Masses celebrated in this same place, in July 1955. The 35th International Eucharistic Congress was going on. Upon a strip of land regained from the sea, the hands of artists had raised an altar-monument. There the papal legate opened and concluded the great event. The voice of my immortal predecessor, Pius XII, resounded here with a father's message for a million persons gathered in this place. It is not possible for me indeed to fail to recall this 25th anniversary. I am glad to recall it together with you and among you, at the time when you are preparing for the imminent 10th national Eucharistic congress at Fortaleza. May it please God that these events, those remembered, those

being lived, those looked forward to, will mean renewal of your thanksgiving to God. May it please him that you will be able to utter your thanksgiving through what is thanksgiving by definition and by excellence, the Eucharist. May he cause you to grow in devotion to it.

The gift of the Eucharist

2. A priest — be he pope, bishop, or an inland parish priest — who celebrates the Eucharist, and a Christian who takes part in the Mass and receives the body and blood of Christ, cannot fail to go deep into the marvels of this sacrament. Many dimensions may be considered within it. It is the sacrifice of Christ, being mysteriously renewed. The bread and the wine are transformed, transubstantiated into the body and blood of the Lord. It is grace that is communicated to the Christian's soul through this spiritual food... On this present occasion I would dwell upon a not less significant aspect: the Eucharist is a family reunion, a gathering of the big family of Christians.

The Lord Jesus willed to institute this great sacrament on the occasion of an important family event. That event was the paschal meal. On that occasion his family was the 12, who had been together with him for three years. For a long time in the church's early days families met in the houses of other families for "breaking of bread." Every altar will always be a table, about which a more and less numerous family of brethren will gather. At the same time the Eucharist brings that family together, and shows to the eyes of all how close are the ties binding its members to each other. St.

Augustine was thinking of all this when he called the Eucharist “sacramentum pietatis, signum unitatis, vinculum caritatis”(sacrament of piety, sign of unity, bond of charity) (In Joannis Evang. Tract. XXVI, cap.6, N.13., PI 35,1613).

As I celebrate this Eucharist I turn my eyes spiritually to all quarters of this immense country. I seek to embrace in one sole glance the 120 millions of Brazilians. I pray for the immense family constituted by all the children of this fatherland and for those here who have found a new homeland.

3. May I tell you something in confidence? When they first spoke to me of Brazil I knew very little of the country. They did not speak to sing its natural beauties, which are marvellous, nor to extol the wealth of its soil and subsoil, which are inexhaustible. Nor to bring out the deeds of one or another notable Brazilian. He who spoke to me — and he had great knowledge of Brazil — told me only that it was a great nation, in spite of all its eventual problems, because all races have met there; people from all over the world have gathered there into one people, without prejudices and without discrimination or segregation. They have met in a bright fusion of spirits and hearts. “It is a family,” my informant told me, enchanted.

I pray that this spirit of family shall never come to be weakened or perish. That it may prevail over any seed of discord or division whatever, over any threat of rupture or separation. I pray that, as differences grow less among Brazilians in regard to progress and wellbeing, opportunities in respect

of cultural goods and civilization, and possibilities to find worthy work, to have health and education, and to bring up children, this "great family" of Brazilians of which my first instructor about Brazil spoke, may become an ever truer reality. I further pray that Brazil may give an essential lesson of true integration in a world frequently dominated by strife among peoples and races, and that she may do so without ostentation, but rather with the spontaneity and naturalness that mark her people.

May she show how persons coming from the most diverse corners of the world can live together as a single family in a country that is also a continent. And I pray, finally, for the members of this "great family" who lie below this monument. Their sacrifice is a permanent appeal for unity among the peoples.

4. This Eucharist, family gathering, brings my thoughts once again to Brazilian families.

The most authoritative investigations into Latin America teach us that the family is of extraordinary importance for you, Latin Americans. I am thinking of the documents produced at Medellin and at Puebla, and of reports coming to me from bishops and episcopal conferences in this quasi-continent; but I am thinking as well of sociological studies of great seriousness. The place that the family occupies in the peoples that go to make up the roots of your nations and the influence that it exerts in formation of your culture, are further reasons for this importance. Far from being an exception, Brazil exemplifies this truth in a notable degree. It is not to be wondered at that here family

feeling is manifested with special vigor, the essential dimensions of family reality are confirmed. That is, respect imbued with love and tenderness, generosity and spirit of solidarity, appreciation for a certain intimacy of the home, tempered by desire to be outgoing. Nor may I fail to exalt two fundamental family dimensions among the others. They are specially important among you, and over the centuries it has been the great transmitter of cultural, ethical, and spiritual values, from one generation to another. On the level of the Christian religion, when other channels were lacking or were extremely precarious, it has often been the sole, or at least the principal channel through which the faith was conveyed from parents to children in the various generations.

5. In view of this, how shall we look upon the grave situations in which numerous families are concretely involved among you, how shall we look upon the serious threats that weigh on the family in general?

Some of these threats are of a social kind. They arise from subhuman conditions, in dwellings, hygiene, health, education. Millions of families are in these conditions, in the interior of the country and on the outskirts of the big cities, by force of unemployment or insufficient wages.

Other threats belong to the moral order. They are connected with generalized disintegration of the family, through ignorance, depreciation, or disrespect of human and Christian norms regarding the family in various levels of the population. Others again belong to the civic order.

They are linked with legislation referring to the family. Such legislation is becoming more and more permissive throughout the world. It is thus less encouraging for those who try to follow the principles of a more elevated ethic in the matter of the family. Please God that it shall never be so in your country. May it please him that, in accordance with the Christian principles that inspire your culture, those who have responsibility to make and proclaim laws shall do so in respect for the irreplaceable values of a Christian ethic. Outstanding among these is the value of human life, the undecidable right of parents to transmit life. Other threats, finally are in the religious order. They derive from scarce knowledge of the sacramental dimensions of matrimony in God's plan.

6. The considerations that I am uttering seem to me to bring out sufficiently clearly the importance and necessity of intelligent, courageous, and persevering family pastoral care. When I spoke to the people of the city of Puebla, in the homily of the unforgettable Mass that I celebrated there, I recalled that numerous Latin American bishops do not hesitate to acknowledge that the church still has much to do in this field. For this reason, when I opened the conference at Puebla, I chose to recommend family pastoral care as an important priority in all your countries. The Puebla document devoted an important chapter to the family: May God will that attention to other themes and concerns in that document — and they are undoubtedly important, yet not exclusively so — will not mean giving less attention to the pastoral

care of the family. Such an error is something that we should have reason to regret later.

This family pastoral care has many fields and complex requirements. Your pastors are aware of this. Many laity engaged in diverse, valuable and worthy family movements show how attentive they are to these fields and requirements. You certainly do not expect the pope to go into them here. This is not the moment for that. However, how can I not recall or at least mention a few among the more important points of this form of pastoral care?

I am thinking of all that has to be done in the field of preparation for marriage. Certainly in the period before the wedding, but why not also from the years of adolescence on — in the family, in the church, in the school? In the form of serious, ample, deep education for true love, something much more demanding than generalized sexual education. I am thinking of a generous and courageous effort to create a propitious environment in society for realizing a Christian family ideal, based on the values of unity, fidelity, indissolubility, and responsible fecundity. I am thinking of the attention to be given to marriages that for various reasons and circumstances are passing through moments of crisis. They might overcome these crises if they received help, but sometimes they break up if they are not aided. I am thinking of the contribution that Christians, especially laity, can offer, towards obtaining social policy that shall be sensitive to family needs and values, and towards avoiding legislation harmful to family stability or equilibrium.

I am thinking, finally, of the measureless value of a family spirituality, which needs to be constantly

perfected, promoted, and propagated. Nor can I not utter a word, here again, of stimulus and encouragement to family movements that devote themselves to this particularly important work.

7. The church's components and magisterium are not without most valuable elements for lucid, comprehensive, and intrepid pastoral attention to families. My predecessors left us valuable documents. Many pastors and theologians have offered us the fruit of their experience and their reflections. Before long the synod of bishops will make a study of "The Functions of the Christian Family" in the contemporary world. It will certainly show ways and give guidelines in this delicate matter. It is from this fount — and not from beside it, even less in contrast with it — that true family pastoral care must drink.

Innumerable families, Christian couples especially, desire and ask for such criteria as shall aid them to live their Christian ideal in regard to fidelity, fecundity, and rearing of children, even in the midst of uncommon difficulties and with efforts that are sometimes heroic. No one has the right to betray this expectation or to disappoint this request, by concealing the true criteria because of timidity, insecurity or false respect, or by offering doubtful criteria, not to say criteria openly straying from the teaching of Jesus Christ transmitted by the church.

8. Dearest brethren and children, at the end of our reflections, let us give our attention to the texts of the New Testament that we have the joy of hearing in this liturgy.

One of them is from the Gospel of St. John. It recounts Jesus' teaching in the synagogue at Capharnaum on the bread of life: as the Lord assures us, this bread is his own flesh, made food for his disciples. It gives them a life that begins here on earth and leads into eternity. The promise given at Capharnaum has been fully kept in the Last Supper and in the mystery of the Eucharist. This is the bread that becomes the body of Christ so as to give life to men.

The pope's deepest and liveliest desire at this moment would be to work a kind of miracle and enter every home in Brazil, to be the guest of every Brazilian family, to share in the happiness of happy families and give thanks to the Lord together with them. To be with families that weep, for some hidden or visible suffering, so as to give them some comfort, if possible. To speak to families where nothing is lacking so as to invite them to distribute what they have in excess; it belongs to those who have nothing. To sit at the table of poor families, where bread is scarce, so as to aid them, not to become rich in the sense that the Gospel condemns riches, but to win what is necessary for a decent life.

If this be an impossible desire, I nonetheless desire to make a vow and form a prayer, as I shortly take Jesus' body and his precious blood in my hands: that this Eucharist, celebrated in this boundless temple, under the cupola of this sky of Rio de Janeiro — much vaster and grander than Michelangelo's — may become the source of true life for the Brazilian people, in order that the Brazilian people shall be a true family, and for each Brazilian family, in order that it shall be a formative cell of this people.

“What I thought how I should present myself to the inhabitants of this country which I visit for the first time, I felt it my duty to present myself before anything else with the teaching of the eight beatitudes.”

REMARKS AT FAVELA VIDIGAL

Favela Vidgal. July 2, 1980

1. When Jesus climbed the mountain and started to proclaim his teachings that we all know as the Sermon on the Mount to all the people about him, before anything else the beatitudes flowed from his lips. The first of them proclaims: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, because theirs is the kingdom of God” (Mt.5, 3).

There is only one mountain in Galilee where Christ uttered his beatitudes. However there are so many places all over the world where the same are announced and heard.

Many are the hearts that do not cease from reflecting on the meaning of those words said once for all. They do not cease from meditating on them. Their only wish is to practice them with all their heart. They try to live these beatitudes in their truth.

On Brazilian soil there are certainly many places like that. And here there were and are many, many of these hearts.

When I thought how I should present myself to the inhabitants of this country which I visit for the first time, I felt it my duty to present myself before

anything else with the teaching of the eight beatitudes. I felt the wish to talk about these to you, people of Vidigal.

Through you I also would like to talk to all who in Brazil live in the same conditions. Blessed are the poor in spirit.

2. Among you are many poor. The church in the Brazilian land wants to be the church of the poor. She wishes that in this great country the first beatitude of the Sermon on the Mount may be fulfilled.

The poor in spirit are the ones who are more open to God and to "God's wonders" (Acts 2, 11). They are poor because they are always ready to accept this gift from heaven which comes from God. They are poor in spirit, those who live knowing that they have received all from God's hands as a free gift and who appreciate everything they receive.

They are constantly thankful, they unceasingly repeat: "All is grace, thank our Lord God." Of them at the same time Jesus says they are "pure in their hearts," "meek."

They are those who "hunger and thirst for justice." They are frequently "the afflicted." They are those who are "peacemakers" and "persecuted for justice's sake."

They are, finally, the "merciful" (cf Mt. 5, 3-10). In fact the poor, the poor in spirit, are more merciful. For that reason hearts open to God are more open to men. They are ready to help and to be useful. They are ready to share what they own.

They are ready to welcome a widow or an abandoned orphan.

They always find one more place in the midst of the restrictions they live in. And even so they always find some food, a piece of bread on their poor table.

Poor, but generous. Poor, but magnanimous. I know there are a lot of people like that among you here, to whom I am addressing my words, and in other parts of Brazil as well.

3. Do Christ's words about the poor in spirit perhaps make one forget about injustices? Do they allow us to leave without solution the different problems raised by the whole of the so-called social problem?

Problems that remain in human history assume different forms at different moments of history and their intensity depends on the dimension of each society in particular as well as the proportion of continents, the whole world in a word. It is natural that these problems assume their own dimension in this land, a Brazilian dimension.

Christ's words calling the "poor in spirit" happy do not claim to suppress all these problems. On the contrary, they make them more evident, focusing them upon this most essential point, man, the human heart, every man without exception, man in regard to God and at the same time in regard to other men.

Does not being poor in spirit precisely make a man more open toward others, that is, toward God and his fellow man?

Is it not true that this beatitude of the "poor in spirit" also contains a warning and an accusation?

Is it not true that it tells the ones who are not "poor in spirit" that they are out of God's kingdom and that the kingdom of God is not and never will be shared by them? Thinking of these "rich" men who are closed to God and to mankind, without mercy, was not Christ to say in another passage, "Woe to you" (Luke 6, 24)?

"Woe to you." These words sound severe and threatening, especially in the mouth of Christ who always spoke kindly and gently and who used to repeat, "May God bless you." However, he will also say, "Woe to you."

4. All over the world the church wants to be the church of the poor. The church in Brazil also wants to be the church of the poor, that is, she wants to draw out all the truth in Christ's beatitudes and especially this first one: "Blessed are the poor in spirit..." She wants to teach this truth and practice it, as Christ came to do and to teach.

The church also wants to draw out all that in the teaching of the eight beatitudes refers to each man: the poor, the one who lives in penury, the one who lives in abundance and well being and, finally the one who has an excess and has more than he needs. The same truths of the first beatitude refer to each one in a different way.

She tells the poor, the ones who live in misery, that they are particularly close to God and his kingdom, but at the same time she tells them that it is not permissible for them and their families —for anyone — to arbitrarily be reduced to misery.

It is necessary to do everything licit to assure oneself and one's family whatever is necessary for life and maintenance. In poverty it is above all necessary to keep human dignity and also that magnanimity, that openness of heart toward others, that readiness which exactly distinguishes the poor, the poor in spirit.

To those who live in abundance or at least with a certain well being, for which they have the necessities (even though they may not save), the church who wishes to be the church of the poor says: "Enjoy the results of your work and of rightful industry, but in the name of Christ's words, in the name of human brotherhood and of social solidarity, do not stay closed in yourselves.

"Think about the poor. Think about the ones who have not what is needed, the ones who live in chronic want, who suffer hunger. Share with them. Share in an organized and methodical way."

May abundance never deprive you of the spiritual fruits of the Sermon on the Mount or separate you from the beatitudes of the poor in spirit.

And the church of the poor says the same, with greater force, to those who have an excess, who live in abundance, who live in luxury. She tells them: "Look around you a bit. Does it not hurt your heart? Do you not feel the stings of your conscience for your surplus and abundance? If not, if you only want to 'get' more and more, if your model is profit and pleasure, remember that man's value is not measured by what he owns but by what he 'is.'"

So someone who has saved much and thinks that everything in life is reduced to that should

remember that he might be worth much less than some of those poor people, that in his soul and under God's eyes maybe he is "much less of a man" than they.

The measure of wealth, money and luxury is not the same as the measure of the real dignity of men.

So those who have a superabundance should avoid closing in on themselves in attachment to their riches, a spiritual blindness. May they avoid this with all their strength. May all the Gospel truth be with them, especially the meaning of these words: "Blessed are the poor in spirit because theirs is the kingdom of heaven..." (Mt.5, 3).

May this truth upset them.

May it be a continuous warning and challenge to them.

May it never allow them to become blinded by selfishness and the satisfaction of their own desires, not for one minute.

If you have a lot, if you have a great deal, remember that you must give a lot, that there is much to give. And you should think how to give, how to organize all social-economic life and each of its sectors so that this life would tend toward equality among men and not toward an abyss among them.

If you know much and you are of high social rank, do not even for one minute forget that the higher you are, the more you should serve. Serve others.

Otherwise you will find yourselves in danger of keeping yourselves and your lives from the field of the beatitudes and in particular from the first one: "Blessed are the poor in spirit."

The "rich" who, by means of their wealth, do not stop from "giving themselves" and "serving others" are "poor in spirit" as well.

So the church of the poor speaks first and above all of man. To each man and so to all men. She is the universal church, the church of the incarnation mystery, not the church of one single class or one single race.

She speaks in the name of her own truth. This truth is realistic. We should take into consideration each human reality, each injustice, each tension, each conflict. The church of the poor will not serve anything that causes tensions and makes strife among men explode.

The only fight, the only one that the church will serve is the noble one for truth and justice, the one for the real good, the one where the church is at one with each man.

On this road the church fights with the "sword of truth" without abstaining from encouraging, as well as warning, sometimes in a very severe way (as Christ did). Very often she even threatens and shows the consequences of hypocrisy and evil.

In this evangelical fight the church of the poor will not serve immediate political purposes, power struggles. She tries at the same time with great care to ensure that her words and actions not be used for that purpose, that is, "instrumentalized."

The church of the poor speaks to "mankind," to each and to all men. At the same time she speaks to society as a whole and to different social levels, to different groups and professions. She speaks to systems and to social structures, both socio-economic and socio-political.

She speaks the Gospel's language, explaining it in light of human knowledge but without introducing strange, heterodox elements contrary to her spirit. She speaks to everybody in the name of Christ, as well as in the name of man, particularly to those for whom Christ's name is not everything, does not express all the truth about man that this name contains.

So the church of the poor speaks like this: You, particularly the ones who in decision-making have power, you, on whom the world situation depends, do everything so that the life of each man in your country may become "more human," more worthy of man.

Do everything so that at least gradually the abyss that divides the few "excessively rich" from the great multitudes of poor, those who live in want, may disappear.

Do everything so that this abyss will not grow but shrink and tend toward social equality, so that the unjust distribution of goods will give way to a more just distribution.

Do it out of consideration for each man who is your fellow man and your fellow citizen. Do it out of consideration for the common good of all. Do it for yourself. Only a socially just society, one that strives to be ever more just, has a reason to exist. Only such a society has a future ahead of it.

A society that socially is not just and that does not try to become so has its future in danger. Think, then, about the past and look at it nowadays and plan a better future for your whole society.

All this is included in what Christ said in his Sermon on the Mount, in the context of this single

sentence: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, because their is the kingdom of heaven."

Dear brothers and sisters, with this message I renew my feelings of deep affection, and as a pledge of God's blessing for you and your families, I give you my apostolic blessing.

“Culture should not suffer any coercion on the part of power, whether economic or political, but ought to be aided by the one and the other in all forms of public and private initiative, in accordance with true humanism, with the tradition and with the authentic spirit of each people.”

ADDRESS AT RIO CATHEDRAL

Rio de Janeiro. July 2, 1980

Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ,

During this pilgrimage through Brazil I have already had the pleasure of seeing much of your beautiful country and of the goodness and noble sentiments and spirit of faith of its people, and here I see the same things. May God be praised! I thank my beloved brother, Cardinal Eugenio de Araujo Sales, and all, through him, for this good welcome that is being given to me now and which I have had here in the Archdiocese of Rio de Janeiro from the preparation committee and all organizations and persons that have taken part.

Together with the cardinal-archbishop I wish to greet his auxiliary bishops and all diocesan and religious priests who make up the local body of priests (presbytery). They share in a particular and intimate fashion with the diocesan pastor the responsibilities inherent in being messengers and distributors of the goods of salvation. Behold! As “salt of the earth” and “light of the world” you are striving to build up the church here according to

well worked out pastoral plans. Be always the visible presence of the sacred in this great metropolis by living and acting, each of you, as what in the truth you are: an "alter Christus" who goes about doing good.

I likewise greet women Religious here present and here represented. I know that you are well organized here in Rio. I count on your support for pastoral labor and in addition on the ever essential support of your life of prayer. Live your consecration with generous commitment and adherence to and readiness for the Lord. Live it in the church and in service to the church's mission. Strong in faith, be joyful in hope.

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil (NC) — Here is an NC News Service translation of Pope John Paul II's remarks to cultural leaders at the residence of Cardinal Eugenio de Araujo Sales July 1.

1. I feel happy at being able to meet with you, eminent cultural personalities of the Brazilian nation. I wish to greet each one of you heartily and show my sincere appreciation and my deep respect. You well know how much and for what reasons the church values and promotes, inasmuch as be her concern, every authentic form of culture and seeks to maintain communication and dialogue with culture.

The meeting place between the church and culture is the world. In it man, who is a "being-in-world," is subject to development through one or the other thing, church and culture, through God's word and grace on the part of the church and through man himself, with all his spiritual and material resources, on the part of culture.

True culture is humanization inasmuch as non-culture and false cultures are dehumanizing. By this same token man commits himself to his destiny in the school of culture.

Humanization, that is to say the development of man, is effected in all fields of the reality in which man is situated and situates himself: in his spirituality and corporality, in the universe, in human and divine society. It is a matter of harmonious development. In this, all sectors of which the being man forms a part are linked with each other: culture does not regard solely the spirit or solely the body, nor, likewise, solely individualities or sociality or universality. Reduction "ad unum" always gives rise to dehumanizing cultures in which man is either spiritualized or is materialized, is dissociated or is depersonalized. Culture ought to cultivate man and each man and woman within the compass of an integral and full humanism. In this every man and all men are developed in the plenitude of each human dimension. Culture has the essential aim of promoting the being of man and of providing him with the goods necessary to the development of his individual and social being.

2. All the various forms of cultural promotion are rooted in "cultura animi," according to Cicero's saying. It means cultivation of thinking and loving. Through that man raises himself to his supreme dignity, which is that of thought, he exteriorizes his self in the sublimest of his gifts, that of loving.

Authentic "cultura animi" is cultivation of liberty, that which emanates from the depths of the spirit, from lucidity of thought and from generous

disinterest in regard to love. There can be no culture outside of liberty. A people's true culture, its full humanization, cannot develop in a regime of coercion. "Culture" says the council's constitution "Gaudium et Spes" (No. 59) "since it flows from man's rational and social nature, has continual need of rightful freedom of development and a legitimate possibility of autonomy according to its own principles."

Culture should not suffer any coercion on the part of power, whether economic or political, but ought to be aided by the one and the other in all forms of public and private initiative, in accordance with true humanism, with the tradition and with the authentic spirit of each people. Culture that is born free ought also be able to spread in a regime of liberty. A man of culture has the duty to propose his culture to others, but not to impose it. Imposition contradicts culture, because it contradicts that process of free personal assimilation on the part of thought and love which is peculiar to the culture of the spirit. An imposed culture not only contrasts with man's liberty, but can hold up the formative process of his own culture. This, in its complexity, from science to forms of dress, arises from collaboration among all men and women.

The church claims for culture, hence for man, a liberty analogous to that which it claims for religious liberty in the council's declaration, "Dignitatis Humanae." The claim regards both the process of cultural development and the act of cultural propagation. That liberty is founded essentially on the dignity of the human person and is made known both by means of God's word and

through reason (Cf n.2). Culture ought to promote liberty at the same time as it respects it. That is, it ought to seek to garb it with the virtues and habits that go to make what St. Augustine called "libertas maior." This means liberty in its full development, liberty in a morally adult state, capable of autonomous options in the face of temptations coming from whatever form of disordered self-love. Full culture comprehends moral formation, education in the virtues of individual life, social life and religious life. "There is no doubt," I said in my recent discourse to UNESCO, "that the prime and fundamental cultural fact is spiritually matured man, that is, the fully educated man, man capable of educating himself and educating others. Nor is there any doubt that the prime and fundamental dimension of culture is sound morality: moral culture" (n.12).

3. Culture, cultivation of man in all his faculties and expressions, is not solely promotion of thinking and acting, but it is also formation of conscience. Because of imperfect or no education of conscience, pure knowledge may give rise to proud humanism that is purely earthly. Action and pleasure may give rise to pseudo-cultures of unchecked productivism for the benefit of national power or private consumerism, with the unhappy consequences of danger of war and most grave economic crises.

Promotion of knowledge is indispensable, but it is insufficient when not accompanied by moral culture.

"Cultura animi" ought to promote instruction and education together. It ought to instruct man in

knowledge of reality. At the same time it ought to educate him to be a man in the totality of his being and his relationships. Now man cannot be fully what he is, he cannot realize his humanity fully, unless he lives the transcendence of his own being over the world and his relationship with God. Elevation of man is not only a matter of promoting his humanity, but it is also a matter of opening his humanity up to God. Making culture means giving man, and every man and woman, and the community of mankind, a human and divine dimension, to offer and communicate to man that humanity and that divinity that emanate from perfect man, the redeemer of man, Jesus Christ.

In the work of culture God makes an alliance with man, he himself becomes a cultural worker for the development of man. "Dei agricultra estis," St. Paul exclaims: "You are God's cultivation" (1 Cor 3,9). Have no fear, gentlemen, open the gates of your minds, of your society, of your cultural institutions to God's action. He is man's friend and works in man and for man, so that man may grow in his humanity and in his divinity, in his being and in his reality over the world.

In the alliance which is established between God and man through human culture, man ought to imitate God in his infinite love. Cultural work is work of love, work that proceeds from that social love, the necessity for which I pointed out in my first encyclical letter, "Redemptor Hominis" (cf n.16). Where there is a lack of social love, through lack of esteem for others, the plurality of legitimate cultures is not respected. Rather there is a will to impose one's own culture —which is neither unique nor exclusive — upon economically and

politically weaker populations. Let us remember what the council said: "Many nations, poorer as far as material goods are concerned yet richer as regards wisdom, can be of the greatest advantage to others" ("Gaudium et Spes," n.15).

4. The cultural unity of a country as vast as yours, where numerous traditions and various historical processes are amalgamating, does not arise from uniformity of culture. It arises from a plurality unified through mutual respect, recognition of cultural peculiarities, enriching dialogue, enrichment with the values and experiences of others.

5. I think that I am doing an elementary duty of justice if at this point I evoke the unpretentious yet exemplary cultural work that has been the church's in this country.

We meet in this work all those aspects of culture that we have recalled so far. From the early years the church began to convey knowledge of things to the aboriginals, together with the revelation of the Gospel, through her missionaries. That knowledge undoubtedly consisted in instruction and in the alphabet. But there was no less an effort to perfect the basic elements of the indigenous culture, without deforming or adulterating them. The church continued down the centuries to make a valid contribution to the cultural task through her missions among the Indios and settlers, through schools and universities, through hospitals and hospices, through her means of social communication. I judge it important to emphasize in this domain that the church's message was not alien to the harmony and equilibrium with which the process of amalgamation of the most diverse races has gone on.

Taking culture in its widest sense, we have to say of Brazil what the Puebla document says of Latin America: The church is historically at the root of this country's culture.

6. A work that respects the people's original culture, permitting its development and spread and facilitating dialogue with other cultures, is the work called alphabetization.

We read in "Populorum Progressio": "An illiterate person is an undernourished spirit. Knowing how to read and write, to gain training for work means gaining confidence in oneself and discovering that one can make progress together with others" (n. 35).

Besides this and other forms of undernourishment of mind we have to consider the grave state of depression in which entire populations exist because of their economic conditions. The economically richer and industrially more developed countries organize consumerism. In this is to be found the origin of ever more emphatic imbalances between rich and poor peoples and between populations within single states. I made mention of this in my encyclical letter "Redemptor Hominis" (cf. n.16).

Social love enlivened by charity must bring a remedy to these situations. Build together, gentlemen, a civilization of truth and love, create a culture that will promote man more and more and facilitate his evangelization. Help him to grow in his human and divine dimensions, to recognize the value of his own being, the meaning of his existence, to know and love Christ, in whom God fully reveals himself to each man and woman and to each people.

“The common good of society will ever be the new name of justice. It cannot be obtained through violence, because violence destroys what it seeks to create.”

TALK TO WORKERS IN MORUMBI STADIUM
Sao Paula. July 3, 1980

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

1. I feel happy and honored to be here among you today in Sao Paulo. I am happy to discover your city, this immense metropolis of incredible industrial development. Incredible industrial growth goes hand in hand here with accelerating urbanization, which is at once fascinating and worrying. I am happy chiefly because I am discovering this city through persons, through you, men and women, who work, suffer and hope here. You came here from all corners of this immense country and from the whole world. You came so as to earn your living and to collaborate in a great common task which is vital for the whole nation: the construction of a city worthy of human beings. Yes, because Sao Paulo is you. Sao Paulo is not mainly these material achievements. They are not always guided by a just and full sense of man and society, nor are they always suitable for organizing an environment where it may be possible to live lives worthy of human beings. Sao Paulo is also the very numerous people on the fringes of society, the unemployed, the underemployed or the ill employed, who do not find ways of using

their hands and developing their generous resources of mind and heart properly. Sao Paulo is you. You are gathered here to celebrate your dignity as workers and manifest your readiness to work together so as to build up a city to the measure of your hopes as humans. Sao Paulo is you, assembled here to seek in the Gospel of Jesus Christ the light and energy necessary for achieving the task that awaits you, that of turning Sao Paulo into a fully human city.

2. Yes, Jesus Christ, the Lord of the universe and of history, brings us together here today. The pope visits you in his name today. Workers, my brothers and sisters, I give thanks to God for having allowed me to be among you. I thank you for the deep joy that this meeting is causing to this minister of Jesus Christ. In the days of his youth, in his native Poland, he knew the condition of being a manual worker directly. He knew its greatness and harshness, its hours of joyfulness and its moments of anguish, the accomplishments and frustrations that go with this condition of life. From the bottom of my heart I say to you what the apostle St. Paul said to the Romans, "I long to see you and to share with you some spiritual gift to strengthen you; rather, what I wish is that we may be mutually encouraged by our common faith" (Rom.1,11-12). Therefore, I invite you, Christian workers, my brothers and sisters, to begin to celebrate in joyfulness and friendship what Jesus offers to one and all of us: the faith, hope and charity with which Jesus enlivens our hearts when we meet in his name, in his church, which he established for gathering up his gifts and distributing them to all. Christian festivity gives joy.

It is not a luxury reserved for the rich. The whole world is invited to take part. Last year those on the fringes of society in another big metropolis, New York, sang the "Alleluia" of resurrection with me. And not long ago Africa, the Africa of poverty, gave the pope and the world the spectacle of an unforgettable festivity.

And this festivity arises from the conviction that we are loved by God and that God is with us. God is visiting us. The kingdom of God is among us. This is the inexhaustible source of our joyfulness: we know how God loves us and recognizes us, we know that we are free from sin, that we have been raised to the insuperable dignity of being God's children, rich in faith, hope and love, which the Holy Spirit pours out into our hearts. So let us celebrate our God and our Father, Jesus Christ our Lord and our brother, who brings us together.

The assembly of bishops at Puebla willed to commit the church in Latin America to an option for the poor. That option is essentially this: that the poor have the Gospel preached to them, that the church once again set all her energies to work so that Jesus Christ may be announced to all, chiefly the poor, and that all have access to this living fount, the table of the word and of bread, the sacraments, the community of the baptized. Here is the meaning of our meeting today, of our Christian feast. We shall go away from here to our task as citizens and workers with fresh enthusiasm. We shall go with a clearer consciousness of our dignity, of our rights, of our responsibilities. We shall go with renewed faith in the prodigious resources with which, by creating us in his image and likeness, he enriches us for

being able to face the challenges of our time, the challenges of this metropolis that is Sao Paulo.

3. I speak to you in the name of Christ, in the name of the church, the entire church. It is Christ that sends his church to all men and all societies with a message of salvation. This mission of the church's is carried out in view of two perspectives at once. There is the eschatological perspective. This regards man as a being whose final destination is God. There is the historical perspective. This looks at this same man in his concrete situation as incarnated in the world of today. This message of salvation is brought by the church in virtue of her mission to every man, to the family, to the various social environments, to nations and to the whole of mankind. It is a message of love and fraternity, a message of justice and solidarity. It is in the first place meant for the most needy. In a word, it is a message of peace and a just social order.

I will repeat here before you what I said to the workers of Saint-Denis, a workers' quarter in another big city, Paris. I began with those most profound words of the Magnificat. I chose to consider together with them that "the world loved by God is a world of justice; that the the order which ought to regulate relations among men is based on justice; that this order ought to be continually being implanted in the world, always afresh, in the measure in which situations and social systems increase and develop, in the measure in which fresh economic conditions and possibilities, fresh technical and productive

possibilities, and at the same time fresh possibilities and needs in distributing goods arise" (Homily at Saint-Denis, May 31, 1980, n.5).

When the church proclaims the Gospel, it also tries, without abandoning its specific role of evangelization, to obtain that all aspects of social life wherein justice is manifested may undergo a transformation toward justice. The common good of society demands as a fundamental requirement that society be just. Persisting injustice, lack of justice threaten society's existence both from inside and outside in the same way as everything that represents an attack upon its sovereignty or seeks to impose ideologies or models upon it, and all economic and political blackmail, all use of the force of arms can threaten society from outside and inside.

This threat from the interior really exists when trust is placed solely in the economic laws of growth and greater profit for regulating the domain of the distribution of goods, when the results of progress touch vast sectors of the population only marginally or not at all.

The danger exists also inasmuch as a deep abyss exists between a very large minority of rich on the one side and on the other side a majority of people living in want and penury.

4. The common good of society will ever be the new name of justice. It cannot be obtained through violence, because violence destroys what it seeks to create. It does this both when it is used to maintain the privileges of some and when it is used in an attempt to impose necessary

transformations. The changes demanded for there to be a just social order ought to be achieved through constant action along the path of peaceful reforms. Such action should always be effective, although often gradual and progressive.

This is the duty of all. It is particularly the duty of those who hold power in society, whether economic power or political power. All power finds its justification only in the common good, in achieving a just social order. Consequently, power should never serve to protect the interests of one group to the detriment of the others. The class struggle is not the path leading to a just social order, because it bears in it the risk of raising the unfavored up to becoming the privileged, thereby creating a fresh situation of injustice against those who have so far had advantages. One cannot build with hatred or the destruction of others. Rejecting the class struggle means opting resolutely for a noble struggle in favor of social justice. The various power centers and the various representatives of society ought to be able to meet, to coordinate their efforts and come to agreement on clear and efficacious programs. This is what the Christian formula for creating a just society consists in. The whole of society ought to be at one with all people and in the first place with those who need help, the poor. The option for the poor is a Christian option; it is also the option of a society that is concerned with the true common good.

5. Let us listen to what Christ himself said in this regard. He was talking to the multitude that had come from all over the region and from beyond the frontiers to see him. He was seated among his

disciples. He began his discourse with these words, "How blessed are the poor in spirit; the kingdom of God is theirs" (Matt. 5,3,). He addressed those words to others besides those who were listening, he addressed them to us too, gathered here in Sao Paulo in Brazil. Twenty centuries have taken nothing from the impelling importance, the gravity and the hope contained in those words of the Lord's. "How blessed are the poor in spirit!" These words are valid for each of us. This invitation is a call to each of us. What Christ asks from all is that they acquire the spirit of being poor.

Those that have possessions ought to acquire the spirit of being poor. They ought to open their hearts to the poor, for if they did not do so situations of injustice would not change. The political structure or social system can be changed, but a just and stable social order will not be achieved without change of heart and conscience. Those who have no possessions, those who are in need, should also acquire "the spirit of being poor"; they should not permit material poverty to take their own human dignity from them, for this dignity is more important than all goods.

It is in this connection that the Christian doctrine on man gives singular value to human labor. This teaching has been nourished on the Gospel, on the Bible and by centuries of experience. The dignity of labor. The nobility of labor. You know the dignity and nobility of your labor as you work in order to live, in order to live better, so as to win your families' daily bread. You feel wounded in your affections as fathers and mothers at seeing your

children ill nourished, you who are so content and proud when you can offer them a loaded table, when you can clothe them well, give them a decent, cozy home, give them school and education in hopes of a better future. Your labor is a service, a service to your families and to the whole city. It is a service in which man himself grows to the degree that he gives himself for others. Work is a discipline wherein the personality is strengthened.

Your prime and fundamental aspiration is therefore to be able to work. What sufferings, what anxieties and miseries are caused by unemployment! Therefore, the prime and fundamental preoccupation of all, of those in government, politicians, labor union leaders and owners of enterprises, ought to be to give work to all. It is not realistic, hence it is not admissible, to expect to find a solution to the crucial problem of employment as a more or less automatic result of an order of things and economic development, of whatever kind, where employment is seen as only a secondary effect. Both the theory and practice of economics ought to have the courage to consider employment and its modern possibilities as a central element in its objectives.

6. It is a matter of justice that working conditions be as worthy as possible, that social insurance be perfected so as to permit all to face social risks, hardships and burdens on the basis of increasing social solidarity. It is legitimate to demand that wages be adjusted in their diverse and complementary forms to the point where it will be

possible to say that the worker really and equitably shares in the wealth that he has contributed to creating through his solidarity and his integral participation in the enterprise, the profession and the national economy concerned. The church has never stopped developing a very rich doctrine on all these points, mainly since the first great social encyclical, "Rerum Novarum." I call upon you all, workers, and those with responsible positions in politics, the professions and labor unions, to give fresh attention to this teaching. No one is going to find ready-made solutions, but clarification and stimuli for thought and practice may be found there. The task is delicate. This complex mass of problems contains many factors — employment, investment, wages — that react with each other. It cannot be settled through demagogy, through ideological enchantments or through cold and theoretical scientism, which, contrary to the true scientific spirit, would leave verification of its suppositions to an uncertain future. I will once more repeat here what I said in regard to employment: to expect that the solution to the problems of pay, social insurance and work conditions will flow naturally from a kind of automatic extension of a certain economic order is not realistic, therefore is not admissible. The economy will be viable only if it is human, for man and through man.

7. For this same reason it is very important for all actors in economic life to have the practical possibility of taking part freely and actively in working out and supervising decisions regarding

themselves at all levels. Pope Leo XIII already affirmed in "Rerum Novarum" the right of workers to meet in free associations for the purpose of making their voice heard, defending their interests and contributing in a responsible manner to the common good. The demands and the discipline required by the common good apply to all within the framework of laws and contracts that can always be improved.

The church proclaims and sustains these various rights of the workers because men and their dignity are at stake. It does this in the deep and ardent conviction that a man who works becomes a cooperator with God. He is made in God's image. He has received the mission of administering the universe so as to develop its riches and assure them a universal destination, to unite men in mutual service and in common creation of a worthy and beautiful way of living for the glory of the Creator.

Workers, never forget the great nobility which, as men and women and as Christians, you ought to imprint upon your work, even the most humble and insignificant. Never let yourselves be degraded by work. Rather seek to live thoroughly that true dignity of labor which God's word and the church's teaching put in evidence. Work really makes you above all collaborators with God in carrying forward the work of his creation. Go on with that dynamism which is contained in the command given to the first man to populate the earth and rule it (Cf. Gen. 1,28). Go on, with sweat on your brows, yes, but above all with just pride in being created in the image of God himself.

Work associates you more closely with the redemption that Christ accomplished through the cross. It does so when it leads you to accept everything that is painful, fatiguing, mortifying and crucifying in the daily monotony; when it leads you even to unite your sufferings with the Savior's sufferings so as to fill up "what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ, for the sake of his body, the church" (Col. 1,24). Therefore, work leads you in the end to feel at one with all your brethren here in Brazil and in the whole world. It makes you builders of the great human family and of the whole church as well in the bond of charity, for each is called to aid the other (Cf. Gal. 6,2) in ever recurrent need for mutual collaboration and in that interpersonal aid whereby we men and women are necessary to each other, without excluding anyone.

This is the Christian concept of labor. It sets out from faith in God the Creator and, through Christ the redeemer, arrives at the edification of human society, oneness with man. Without this vision any effort is lacking and wasted, however tenacious it may be. It is fated to disappoint, to fail. Build on this foundation. And if they tell you that in order to defend labor's gains it is necessary to put this Christian vision of existence aside or even to cancel it out, do not believe them. Without God and without Christ man builds on sand. He betrays his own origin and his nobility. In the end he comes to do harm to man, to offend his brother.

8. You work in the situation of a big city that continues to grow rapidly. It is a reflection of the

incredible possibilities of the human race, which is capable of admirable achievements but is also capable of tearing and grinding man down when spiritual motivation and moral orientation are absent.

An exclusivist economic logic often invades all fields of existence, spoiling the environment, threatening families and destroying all respect for the human person. Such logic is even more depraved by crass materialism. Factories discharge their waste, deform and pollute the environment; the air becomes unbreathable. Waves of migrants pile up in indecent shacks, many lose hope there and end in misery. Children, youngsters, adolescents find no living space for developing their physical and mental energies fully. They are often restricted to unhealthy quarters or must wander in the streets and live in the flow of traffic between cement walls and the faceless multitude that wears them down and never becomes individually known to them. There are districts where life is lived with all modern comforts. Beside them are others where the most elementary things are not to be found. Some peripheral areas are growing in disorder. Development is often a gigantic version of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. The proximity between luxury and penury heightens the feeling of frustration in the unfortunate. A fundamental question therefore becomes imperative: how is the city to be transformed into a truly human city in its natural environment, its constructions and its institutions?

An essential condition is that of giving the economy human meaning and logic. What I said

about work holds good here too. It is necessary to liberate the various fields of existence from the dominion of subjugating economism. It is necessary to put economic demands in their proper place and create a multiform social texture such as will avoid massification. No one is dispensed from cooperating in this task. We can all do something in ourselves and around ourselves. Is it not true that the most neglected districts are often the places where solidarity arouses gestures of the greatest self-detachment and generosity? Christians, wherever you may be, take your share of responsibility in this immense effort for bringing human restructuring to the city. Faith makes this a duty. Faith and experience together will give you light and energy to start moving.

9. Christians have the right and the duty to contribute so far as they are able to building up society. And they do so through associational and institutional frameworks that a free society operates with participation by all. The church as such does not claim to run society or to take the place of lawful organs of deliberation and action. It only claims to serve all those who at any level take on responsibilities for the common good. Its service is essentially in the ethical and religious order. But, in accordance with its mission and in order to guarantee such service, the church demands with full right a space for the indispensable liberty to seek to maintain its specific religious nature.

So all communities of Christians, both basic communities and parishes, diocesan communities or the whole national church community ought to make their specific contributions to building up

society. All man's concerns must be taken into consideration. This is so because evangelization, the church's reason for being, any ecclesial community's reason for being, would not be complete unless it took into account the relations existing between the Gospel message and man's personal and social living, between the commandment to love one's suffering and needy neighbor and concrete situations where injustice must be combatted, and justice and peace be installed.

May this meeting of ours today around Jesus Christ bring with it the certainty that the church wills to be present with all its Gospel message in the heart of the city, in the heart of the poorest people of the city, in the heart of each one of you. You are loved by God, workers of Sao Paulo and Brazil. And you ought to love God. This is the secret of your joy, of a joy that will flow from your hearts and shine in your faces and on the city's face as a sign that it is a human city.

"I would above all answer a number of questions that must have more and less consciously come to the surface in your hearts: Why has the pope come from so far to us? What motives have brought him?"

HOMILY AT MASS

Porto Alegre. July 5, 1980

Venerable brothers, most beloved children,

1. **Laudetur Jesus Christus! (Praised be Jesus Christ)**

It is with these words of Christian greeting that I would address you at this meeting which providence has set in the schedule of my journey through Brazil in this hour of spiritual plenitude.

I thank you for the comfort that this so affectionate and cordial welcome brings me. Do not be concerned, however, with my humble person. Rather raise your hearts to him whom that person represents and serves, the Lord Jesus Christ. I come to you in his name. He will soon come down upon this altar. All honor and glory to him, particularly on this day which is lit by the mild and peaceful triumph of the Eucharist in Brazilian lands.

I would now meet a desire of yours, one that perhaps has not even been expressed. I would above all answer a number of questions that must have more and less consciously come to the

surface in your hearts: Why has the pope come from so far to us? What motives have brought him?

Well, most beloved sons and daughters, the reason is this: I come so as to get to know you better, to listen to you, to get into dialogue with you, to show you that the church is close to you and shares your problems, your difficulties and sufferings, your hopes. I am the first pope to come to this most beautiful country. I come, then, in order to thank the Lord together with you for the invaluable gift that has been made to you, the gift of the Catholic faith. Your marvelous country, where nature pours out immense riches, is a young country. It is open to the future and shows impressive vigor in all sectors of human life. But your greatest wealth is the religious and moral heritage of your Christian tradition. This heritage deserves to be preserved at all costs. But, even more, it ought also to enter into the nation's ascending course, to be the nation's soul. This should be so in order that, just as the subsoil of your history yesterday was Catholic, so also the spirit of your society may be alive and active in the Christian way today.

I come to carry out the mission received by Peter and his successors. I come to confirm you in the faith. We heard in the second reading that Paul went about cities already evangelized, exhorted Christians to observe the apostolic teaching and confirmed them in the faith that they had received. (Cf. Acts 16,4-5). I pray to God that this apostolic journey of mine may have the same meaning for you and obtain the same result.

Therefore, most beloved sons and daughters, here is the best wish that I can give you, the guidance that I desire to leave with you as remembrance of my journey. It is the words of St. Peter to the communities of the early church: "Remain firm in the faith" (1 Pt. 5,9), firm in interior, full and sincere adherence to the Gospel, firm in exterior proclamation of it. Your proclamation of it ought to be free of all immoderation or disrespect for the opinions of others, but it ought to be frank, courageous, coherent, persevering and worthy of the faith of your fathers.

2. You are a nation that is today at a stage of feverish transformation. This is bringing no little changes about, as you well know, not only in the look of the country, but even more in inner life and the people's way of living as well.

Will the Christians of Brazil be ready to face the shock caused by this transition from old to new economic and social structures? Will their faith be in a condition to remain unshakeable?

In other times it was enough for many to have a modest mastery of elementary instruction and that sincere popular religiousness which is so profoundly rooted, with its various expressions, in the social and cultural texture of your nation.

Today it is no longer so. The spread of culture, the critical spirit, the publicity given to all questions and debates require fuller and deeper knowledge of the faith. Popular religion itself ought to be nourished with ever more extensive explanations of revealed truth, and it ought to be

freed from elements that make it seem inauthentic. It has need of that solid food of which St. Paul speaks. In other words, a serious and systematic effort at catechesis is imperatively necessary. This is the problem before you today with all its gravity and urgency.

Providentially this effort is already being made in your country. That effort corresponds to the church's fundamental task, to her prime and specific mission. Your bishops said at Puebla, "We have been evangelized by the Lord in his spirit, we have been sent to bring the good news to all the brethren, especially to the poor and forgotten" (n.164).

This is a grandiose duty and all of us are called to make our contribution. A building consists of many stones. Its construction is the result of the joint effort of him who formed the idea and him who put the plans into practice.

3. So it is with the church, as we see today. The great constructor of the church is God. He formed the idea and continues to give it life. But the stones are those who serve as docile and ready instruments for the Holy Spirit's action and who transmit this marvellous inheritance of faith. Now it is for you to extend it, so that the coming of God's reign may be a reality.

What service can be more beautiful than that of the catechist who announces the divine word and joins in love, confidence and respect with his brother so as to help him to discover and realize God's providential designs in this regard?

Yet at the same time it is an extremely hard and delicate task. This is so because catechesis is not simply teaching, but is the transmission of a message of life, the like of which it will never be possible to find in other expressions of human thought, however sublime.

When we say "message" we mean something more than a doctrine. How many doctrines after all never succeed in becoming messages.

A message is not limited to putting out ideas. It demands a response, since it is an interpellation, a query from one person to another, he who gives the message and he who answers it.

A message is life. Christ announced the good news, salvation and happiness: "How blest are the poor in spirit, blest the meek, blest the persecuted..." (Cf. Mt 5, 3-11); and again, "I leave you my peace, I give you my joy" (cf. Jn 14, 27; 5,11).

The multitudes listened to him because they saw hope and fullness of life in him (cf. Jn. 10, 10).

In addition to that, it is necessary to respect this divine message, for man is not the judge of God's word and work (cf. "Catechesi Tradendae," nn. 17,29,30,49,52,58,59). Man ought to respect it by keeping himself faithful, to Christ above all, to his truth, to his commandment — otherwise there will be alteration, betrayal — and faithful to man, for whom the Lord's word and message are intended — not man in the abstract, imaginary man, but concrete man who lives in time, with his dramas, his hopes. It is to this man that the Gospel ought to be announced, so that in it and through it he may receive strength from the Holy Spirit to realize

himself fully in the integrity of his being and his values.

Consequently, the effectiveness of catechesis will largely depend on this capacity to give a meaning, a Christian meaning, to everything that makes up man's life in his time, as man among men, citizen among citizens.

4. As for the theme of catechesis, you know that the church's thought on the matter was amply expressed in the recent apostolic exhortation "Catechesi Tradendae." I will not try to repeat what is said in that document. However, I would call your attention to a few points as they touch more nearly on the needs of the church in Brazil.

Catechesis in the family: Nothing can come before this. It lays the basis in the child's early years of life of what his future may be. Therefore his parents ought to understand the importance of their mission in this regard. By virtue of their baptism and matrimony they are their children's first catechists. Educating the young is actually really a continuation of the act of begetting them. In our age God comes particularly "through the part played by the family" ("General Catechetical Directory," 79).

Children need to know and to see that their parents love each other, that they respect God, that they know how to explain the first truths of the faith (cf. "Catechesi Tradendae," n. 36), that they know how to present "the Christian content" through testimony and perseverance in "daily life lived according to the Gospel." (ibid. n. 68)

Testimony is fundamental. God's word is efficacious in itself, but it takes on concrete meaning when it becomes reality in the person announcing it. To a child there is no distinction between a praying mother and prayer. More, such prayer has special value because it is the mother's prayer.

Beloved parents listening to me, do not permit your children to come to individual, social and professional maturity while remaining children in matters of religion. It is not true to say that faith is an option for adult age. True option presupposes knowledge. There can never be choice among things that have not been wisely and adequately expounded.

Catechist parents, the church has confidence in you, she hopes much from you.

In addition, I would strongly recommend parish catechesis. The parish is where catechesis can deploy all its richness. There, associated with the hearing of the word, prayer, celebration of the Eucharist and the other sacraments, fraternal communion and the exercise of charity, the Christian mystery is announced and lived. There is pressing need for each parish to become a place where catechesis will take up most attention and the parish rediscover its "own vocation. This vocation is that of being a family house, a fraternal and welcoming home where the baptized and the confirmed may gain awareness of being people of God " (ibid. n. 67)

Then there is religious instruction in schools. A citizen is trained at school through cultural and professional education. Education of religious conscience is a right of the human person. The

young demand to be set on the path of all dimensions of culture. They also wish to be able to find possibilities at school for getting to know the fundamental problems of existence. First place among these is taken by the problem of the response that they ought to give to God. It is impossible to arrive at authentic life choices when there is a will to disregard the religion that has so much to say in that regard. It is likewise impossible when there is a will to restrict religious instruction to vague and neutral teaching. This is useless, for it is without relation to concrete models coherent with a people's tradition and culture.

The church defends this duty to be in the school. She has not thought nor does she think of privileges. She strives for integral and ample education and for the rights of families and persons.

5. Finally, I would recall the great contribution that comes to us from the means of social communication.

We cannot fail to admire how enormously they are developed. Culture reaches all points through them; there are no longer barriers of space and time. These means penetrate homes and reach the humblest and farthest of places.

They offer many advantages. They inform rapidly, they instruct, entertain, make men brothers. They join rational expression with image, with symbol, with personal contact. The word is linked with esthetic and artistic expression.

Their power is such that they add power to what they mention and take it away from what they do not mention.

They entail a number of dangers: leveling of culture, consequently reducing of culture, passivity and emotivity in hearers and viewers, impoverishment of critical sense, manipulation of minds, hence of the impulse for evasion and hedonism.

These defects, however, are not the fault of technology and its means, but of man, who makes use of them. Catechesis was until lately above all expressed in writing. Now it is called upon more and more to find expression through these new instruments. The task is a big and a very responsible one. We need to act through the communications media and at the same time educate in use of them (cf. "Inter Mirifica," 3). We shall build up the church to the degree that we know how to work in this field.

6. Most beloved children, however substantial and certain, catechesis would have little value if it were not conveyed with efficient expression and the support of these didactical aids that are today offered in ever richer and promising forms. Catechesis requires "ars docendi" of a special kind, a pedagogy of its own. Ordinary information is not enough for having that art. Often it is partial and empirical, as may be that of any priest or Religious or any layman or laywoman with religious instruction.

Many cultural, didactic and, above all, moral elements are necessary for giving the catechist that prestige and effectiveness which ought to mark him. Does not a danger perhaps exist here that through lack of such requirements catechetical teaching may be not only fruitless but sometimes even harmful as well? For this reason it is with great satisfaction that we learn that catechesis training schools are appearing and multiplying among you, so as to give catechists the chance to be properly prepared in doctrine and didactics and spirituality through progressive training. So you can understand how I am full of hope, to which I add insistent prayer, and so form my warmest good wishes for fruitful results from all these sensible initiatives.

Today's Gospel speaks to us through symbols of life and growth, which is sometimes slow, but is constant: The seed that is cast upon the soil and develops into an ear of corn, the grain of mustard that grows into a bush where the birds of the air find shelter (cf. Mk. 4, 1-2; 26-32). May each and all of you meditate well upon the meaning of these words of the Lord's, and, as each lives his and her specific vocation and mission in the church, may you keep this life within you and share in its growth, so as to aid others to grow in firm and mature faith too.

Most beloved children, I speak to you with profound affection. I give you some guidelines, but above all I would encourage you. May the Lord bless you on the path that you have taken, laudably and with joy. I recommend all of you to Mary most holy, "mother and model of catechists" ("Catechesis Tradendae," 73).

“What course is the world on? Where is it going? I am not speaking to you here as an economist or sociologist, but by virtue of the mandate and mission as universal pastor of that church...described as ‘expert in humanity’.”

ADDRESS TO BUILDERS
OF A PLURALISTIC SOCIETY
Salvador. July 6, 1980

Dearest brothers and sisters,

1. Here I am in your city, which hangs, magnificent, over the Bay of All Saints. It is with immense joy that I contemplate you gathered in this numerous assembly at this stadium.

I greet your cardinal, Avelar Brandao Vilela, his coadjutor archbishop, his auxiliary bishop, and his closest collaborators. I greet the state and city authorities. I greet the priests, and men and women Religious here present. I greet this multitude, in which I see very dear sons and daughters. I search your faces one by one, I grasp your hands and offer you an embrace. In the church we are not a shapeless and faceless mass, we are not impersonal and unknown one to the other. We are the people of God. We are loved, one by one, by the Father, in the Son, through the Holy Spirit. We are persons capable of responding to the appeal of this God's everlasting love. He has known us always and predestined us to conformity

with the image of his Son. He called us, he justified us, and he glorified us (Cf. Rom. 8,30). So, we are brethren, we love each other and form one sole body.

I salute you, people of God who are in Sao Salvador da Bahia. I greet this church, which is eternally loved by the Lord, I greet it with words used by St. Paul which the liturgy makes its own: "The grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of the Father and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (Cf. 2 Cor. 13,13)

2. This meeting is dedicated to: "Builders of a Pluralistic Society Today." They have come here especially, as a sign of the extraordinarily rich reality of human, intellectual and social powers which Brazil represents in the world. I therefore greet you in a particular fashion, brothers and sisters. You make construction of society your ideal, your honor, your daily work. Every man is a builder of the society in which he lives. The Second Vatican Council brought out this truth: "The laity" it said, "must take on renewal of the temporal order as their own special obligation. Led by the light of the Gospel and the mind of the church, and motivated by Christian love, let them act directly and definitively in the temporal sphere. As citizens they must cooperate with other citizens, using their own particular skills and acting on their own responsibility. Everywhere and in all things they must seek the justice characteristic of God's kingdom" ("Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity," 7).

In you all I see builders of the Brazil of today and tomorrow. If Brazil has arrived within sight of the 21st century as a nation full of promise, this is thanks to the efforts of individuals who have contributed towards building up their own community, their city and their nation by seeking their own improvement and the well-being due to them, their families, and their fellow citizens. You are likewise called to construct the future of your country, a future of peace, prosperity and concord. That future will be guaranteed only when all citizens, in accordance with their responsibilities and with a single common concern, will be able to create and keep up social relations based on respect for the common good that puts man, God's creation, in the center of all things.

I would vigorously emphasize this reality. I address one and all of you, those present and those absent: workers and industrialists, professional men and women and students, economists and artists, men of science and technology, artisans, craftsmen, journalists, politicians and people on the land, dwellers in big and small cities. All of you in some way and to some degree are builders of the pluralist society of today.

The word pluralist itself already tells of the complexity and richness of the modern world, its dynamism, its vitality, its continuous ascent towards higher levels. Congratulations, men and women who are building the world of today and of tomorrow

3. What course is the world on? Where is it going? I am not speaking to you here as an

economist or sociologist, but by virtue of the mandate and mission as universal pastor of that church which my unforgettable predecessor Paul VI described as "expert in humanity."

The grand spectacle of power and creative and constructive capacity in man which modern society displays arouses amazement and admiration in us. No less frightening is the spectacle of alienation to which society has very often been reduced. On my first coming to your continent I felt the need to say to the bishops of Latin America assembled at Puebla, "One of the most notable weaknesses of present civilization lies in an inadequate vision of man. Ours is doubtless the epoch in which there has been most writing and talking about man, it is the epoch of humanisms and anthropocentrisms. Yet, paradoxically, it is also the epoch of profound anxieties in man about his identity and destiny, and of abasement of man to levels once unimaginable: it is the epoch when human values are trampled down as never before" (Opening Discourse, i,9).

There is no need to tell you, for you all know very well, of the harm done to man by a self-sufficient culture and technology closed to the transcendent, man reduced to being a sheer instrument of production, the victim of preconceived ideologies or the cold logic of economic laws, manipulated for utilitarian ends or group interests, that disregarded or disregard man's true good.

The very word "pluralism" bears a danger within it. In a society that likes to call itself "pluralist" there is actually a diversity of beliefs, of ideologies, of philosophical ideas. However, acknowledgement of this reality, this plurality,

does not exempt me —nor any Christian adhering to the Gospel — from affirming what is the necessary base, the unquestionable principle that ought to support all activity directed toward constructing a society that ought to meet man's requirements, both on the level of material goods and on the level of spiritual and religious goods, a society founded on a system of values which can defend it from individual or collective egoism.

4. Conscious as I am of the universal mission that has brought me among you in these days, I have the duty to proclaim God's word loudly: "Unless the Lord build the house they labor in vain who build it" (Ps.126, 1).

This is the reply that the church must give, today above all: society may not be built without God, without God's help. That would be a contradiction. God is the guarantee of a society made to man's measure: first because he imprinted the supreme nobility of his image and likeness within man (Cf. Gen. 1,26 Sqq.); then, because Jesus Christ came to restore that image that had been stained by sin. As "redeemer of man," he gave it back its unrenounceable dignity of its origin. External structures, international communities, states, cities, each man's activity, ought to lay stress upon this reality, and give it the space it needs. Otherwise they fall to pieces or become a facade without a soul.

The church founded by Christ shows man of today the path to follow for building up the earthly city, which is the prelude to the heavenly city, although it is not free of antipathies and con-

traditions. The church shows the way to building society to function in terms of man, in respect for man. Its task is to bring the leaven of the Gospel into all fields of human activity. It is in Christ that the church is "an expert in man."

Perusing the history of your fatherland, I could not fail to notice that, as it carried out its mission in other centuries, the church contributed to making that same history, to determining the values that constitute the cultural history of the Brazilian people. The church is linked to your people in such a way that to eliminate it would mean mutilating the people's social and cultural patrimony. Therefore the church must go on collaborating in construction of your society, by discerning and nourishing aspirations for justice and peace that it finds in individuals and in the people, with its wisdom and its effort to promote such aspirations. The church will respect the competence of public men in these matters. It will not claim to intervene in politics, it will not aspire to share in managing temporal affairs. Its specific contribution will be to fortify the spiritual and moral bases of society, by doing what is possible for all or any activity in the field of the common good to go on in harmony and coherence with the directives and demands of a human and Christian ethic.

5. Still with concrete reality as the object, the concrete task performed in common, this service is above all a service of formation of consciences. It means proclaiming the moral law and its demands, denouncing errors and attacks against the moral law and man's dignity, upon which that law is based; it means clarifying, convincing.

This is what I observed in the speech at Puebla already mentioned: "Particular care must be given to forming a social conscience at all levels and in all sectors. When injustices increase and when the distance between rich and poor painfully increases too, social doctrine ought to be a valuable instrument for training and action, in a creative form, open to wide fields of the church's action" (Opening Speech, 3,7).

The church does not propose a concrete political or economic model in its social doctrine; but it shows the way, presents principles. And it does so by reason of its evangelizing mission, by reason of the evangelical message, which has man as its objective, in his eschatological dimension, but also in the concrete context of his historical situation, today; it does so because it believes in man's dignity, as being created in God's image, in the dignity that is intrinsic to every man and every woman, and every child, whatever be the place that he occupies in society.

Every man has the right to expect that society will respect his human dignity and allow him to maintain a life in accord with that dignity. In the speech which I delivered before the Organization of American States (OAS) on Oct.7 last year, I set forth man as the sole criterion giving meaning and direction to all commitment by those responsible for the common good, whether simple citizens or vested with power.

I proposed the concrete man as the criterion, in these words: "When there is talk of the right to life, to physical and moral integrity, to nourishment, to shelter, to education, to health, to work, to responsible participation in the nation's life, the talk is of

the human person. And this human person often happens to be in danger, famished, without a decent house and work, without access to the cultural heritage of his people or of mankind, and without voice enough to make his troubles be heard. It is necessary to give fresh life to the great cause of all-round development. This ought to be done precisely by those who already enjoy those goods in one way or another. They ought to put themselves at the service of all those —so numerous on your continent — who are deprived of these same goods to a degree which is at times dramatic" (Speech to the OAS, Oct.6, 1979, n.5).

6. Putting man in the center of all social activity therefore means feeling concern at every injustice because it offends man's dignity. Taking man as the criterion means committing oneself to transformation of every unjust situation and reality, so as to turn them into elements for a just society.

That was the message which I directed to the authorities of this country; this is the message that I presented to the workers of Sao Paulo. This is also the message that I bring to you today, builders of society who are listening to me here, in Sao Salvador da Bahia.

Every society ought to establish a just social order unless it wishes to be destroyed from within. This appeal is not a justification of the class struggle — for the class struggle is destined to sterility and destruction — but it is an appeal to a noble struggle for the sake of social justice throughout society.

You all, who have taken the name of builders of society, have a certain power in your hands, because of your positions, your situations, or your activities. Use that power in the service of social justice. Reject that kind of reasoning which is inspired by the collective egoism of a group or of a class or is based on the motivation of one-sided material profit. Reject violence as means of resolving the problems of society, since violence is contrary to life, it destroys man. Apply your power, be it political, economic or cultural, to the service of solidarity embracing the whole of man, in the first place men and women who are most in need, whose rights are most frequently violated. Put yourselves on the side of the poor, in consistency with the church's teaching, on the side of all who in some way are the most deprived of spiritual or material goods, to which they have a right.

“How blessed are the poor in spirit” (Matt. 5,3). Blessed are they who know how to save their human dignity in the midst of want. But blessed also are they who do not let themselves be possessed by their possessions, who do not allow their sense of social justice to be stifled by attachment to their goods. Truly blessed are the poor in spirit!

7. In presenting this message of justice and love to you the church is true to its mission and aware of serving the good of society. It does not consider that it is its task to enter into political activities, but it knows that it is at the service of the good of mankind. The church does not combat power, but proclaims that power is for the good of society and

the safeguarding of society's sovereignty, that power is necessary. And that only this justifies it. The church is convinced that it is its right and its duty to promote a social pastorate, that is, to exert an influence, through the means proper to it, so that society may become more just, thanks to joint, decided, but always peaceful action on the part of all citizens.

So I will speak to all who in some sector of society are builders of this society and to whom my word reaches, with the church's word, here in Salvador or any other part of Brazil.

To you chiefly who have special responsibilities because of your position and power as Christians.

To you political leaders or militants I would remind you that the political act par excellence is that of being coherent with a moral calling and true to an ethical conscience which, above and beyond personal or group interests, has the common good of all citizens in view.

I speak to you, educators, who have the task of explaining to the young and holding a dialogue with them about the values through which they in their turn will become builders of society. I ask you to base your work on solid foundations and inculcate a sense of the dignity of the human person in our youth.

Entrepreneurs, traders and industrialists, I exhort you to put man first in your plans and projects, that man who is a builder of society, through his labor and the produce of his hands and his wits. He is first a builder of his own family, then of broader communities. Do not forget that every man has a right to work, not only in cities and in

great industrial concentrations but in the countryside as well.

Men of science, technicians, I have the right to remind you: that the ethical always takes first place over the technical and man over things.

To you, workers, I have to say: construction of society is not the task only of those who control the economy, industry and agriculture. You build society also with your sweat, for your children and for the future. If you have the right to say your say about economic and industrial activity, you also have the duty to shape what you say according to the demands of the moral law, which is justice, dignity, and love.

For you, specialists in communications, I have a request: do not shackle the soul of the masses with the power that you hold, by sifting information and by exclusively promoting the consumer society, where abundance is accessible only to a minority. Be above all spokesmen for man, his rightful demands and his dignity. Be instruments of justice, of truth, and of love. Defend what is human and give man access to full truth.

8. Yes, brothers and sisters, building society is first of all a matter of acquiring a conscience; not in the exclusive sense of gaining knowledge of the results of a certain situation analysis or survey of the evils of society, but in the full meaning of the word, that is forming one's consciousness according to the demands of God's law, of Christ's message about man, of the ethical dimension of all human enterprise.

Building up society means committing oneself, taking the side of conscience, of the principles of

justice, of brotherhood, of love, against the intentions of egoism, which spoils brotherhood, and hatred, which destroys.

Building society means going beyond barriers, divisions, oppositions, so as to work together. Man has the capacity to open to others. Christ asks us in a stunning way, "Who is my brother?" No lasting and truly human work is possible unless it be made for all, through collaboration by all vital forces in society, through interchange among all men and women, without distinction of social position or economic situation.

Finally, building society means continual conversion of self, revision of one's attitudes, so as to detect sterile prejudices and discover one's own errors, in order to open up to the imperatives of a conscience formed in the light of the dignity of every human person, as was revealed and confirmed by Jesus Christ. It means opening heart and spirit so that justice, love and respect for man's dignity and destinies may penetrate thought and inspire action.

9. The church, that "expert in mankind," offers its collaboration for building up a world to man's measure. But it also calls for your full, sincere, generous collaboration, without ulterior intentions.

It depends on each and every one of you whether the future of Brazil is to be a future of peace, whether Brazilian society is to be life together in justice. I believe that the time has come for every man and every woman in this immense country to resolve to use the wealth of their talents

and consciences decidedly for giving life to the nation on a basis that shall guarantee development of social realities and structures in justice. Anyone who reflects on the reality of Latin America, as it presents itself at this moment, is led to agree with the statement that the realization of justice on this continent faces a clear dilemma: either it will come through profound and courageous reforms, according to principles that express the supremacy of the dignity of man, or it will come — but without lasting result and without benefit for man, of this I am convinced — through the forces of violence. Each one of you must feel that he is being challenged by this dilemma. Each one of you must make his choice at this historic hour.

Brothers and sisters, my friends be not afraid to look ahead, to go forward, to set off for the year 2000. A new world must arise. In God's name and man's, do not refuse. The church expects much from you. "Will you, together with me, build the world, raise it, make it better and more worthy of you and your brethren, who are my brethren?" Do not frustrate Christ's expectation. Do not disappoint the hopes of man, your contemporary.

In this immense but stupendous effort, know that the pope is with you, prays for you, has you in his heart, and, in Christ's name, blesses you.

"It is not enough effectively to have land in abundance, as happens here in your beloved Brazil. One needs a just legislation in agrarian matters in order to be able to say he has a society corresponding to the will of God, as much as regards the land as the requirements of the dignity of the human person, of all human persons who live on it."

HOMILY AT MASS IN RECIFE

Recife. July 7, 1980

Dear brothers and sisters, especially you, peasants of the Northeast, and, through you, the peasants of all Brazil:

1. My first word is very simple but it arises from an impulse of the heart. It is a word of very cordial greeting to you. I greet you who are here, at the cost of I know not what sacrifices. You certainly came drawn by faith and with a desire to hear the vicar of our Lord Jesus Christ. This gesture does not surprise me, for I have long known of the great religious spirit that is in you.

I greet you who could not be here in spite of your great desire. I hope that my voice will be able to reach you at least by radio.

For my part I would gladly greet you one by one, but you will understand how that is totally impossible. But be certain, at least, as if I were telling each of you singly, that the pope feels great concern for you, he knows and values what you are

doing, he loves you as true children and he is happy to be able to have this meeting.

It is not enough effectively to have land in abundance, as happens here in your beloved Brazil. One needs a just legislation in agrarian matters in order to be able to say he has a society corresponding to the will of God, as much as regards the land as the requirements of the dignity of the human person, of all human persons who live on it. One needs legislation which may carry out and serve the good of all men and not only the interests of minorities or individuals.

In addition to the abundance of land and an adequate legislation one must achieve, above all, good will and a sincere conversion of many to man in his transcendent fullness.

The man of the fields identifies himself with his work, with the land, from which flows the sustenance of so many, even in the great cities. He plants deep roots there, which indelibly mark his being. To tear him away from his native land, to shove him toward an uncertain exodus in the direction of the great metropolis or not to guarantee his rights to the legitimate possession of land means to violate his rights as a man and as a son of God.

It means to introduce a dangerous disequilibrium into society. In addition, measured and human integral development means to guarantee always in balanced conditions both the technological and industrial progress of a nation and the priority of attention to agricultural questions, so indispensable in our times in the ambiance of an independent, harmonious and just society. In this aspect I limit myself to calling at-

tention to the directives of my predecessor, John XXIII, in the encyclical, "Mater Et Magistra."

"Where are you going?" I asked this question on various stops of my apostolic visit to Brazil. I want to repeat it here for you and with you, for all those who in whatever measure are part of the responsibility for the rural world and for the common good. "Where are you going?" May the reply be a courageous, firm, inspiring attitude of Christian values in defense of the promotion of the rights of man, of the men of the field as well as those associated with them every day in life and in the construction of a society more just and therefore more human.

2. And why this meeting with the peasants of the Northeast? First of all because they play a role of enormous importance in Brazilian society today and deserve a word of stimulus and encouragement from him who has received the mission of being universal pastor of the church. Then, because you have to face particularly painful situations of living on the margins of society: penury, undernourishment, unhealthy conditions, illiteracy, insecurity.

You therefore have the right to a word of comfort, hope and guidance, such as a father owes in a particular way to his more abandoned sons and those most tried by life. He cannot go through Brazil without addressing his words to you.

3. It is a secret to no one that the world is today passing through a difficult hour in its history. Grave problems weigh upon all sectors of the lives

of peoples and nations, on the agricultural sector particularly. I had occasion to say on my visit to the headquarters of the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization that agriculture is a sector that has "been maintained too long on the margin of progress in living standards. It is a sector touched in a particularly painful manner by the rapid and profound social and cultural changes of our time. They bring out the injustices inherited from the past, they disestablish people, families and societies, they pile up frustrations and oblige massive and chaotic migrations to take place" (Nov. 12, 1979, No. 2).

I follow with endless interest the convergent efforts of all good wills. I never let an occasion go without taking care to support them with prayer, with words, with my personal commitment. I do so in hope that these efforts in the domain of agriculture will arrive at the best solutions with a view to the personal well-being of every man and woman in respect for the requirements of the common good.

The considerations that I now go on to express at our gathering here are dictated by one sole purpose: On the basis of the church's own mission and the role proper to her, as far as possible reflect them in the light of the church's magisterium in the social field and so try to "establish the human community according to the divine law" (cf. "Gaudium Et Spes," No. 42). In this way, with the power of the Spirit, which is the only power that the church has, and with full respect for the autonomy of temporal power, but with consciousness of her responsibilities, the church will not be lacking in an effort "to make human life ever

more human," to arouse consciences and "make every element of his life correspond to man's true dignity" ("Redemptor Hominis," No. 14).

4. When we reflect seriously and calmly about man and human life together in society, enlightened and strengthened by God's word and the church's teaching since the beginning, such reflection tells us that the earth, the land, is a gift from God. It is a gift that he makes to all human beings, both men and women, that he wills all human beings to be fathered in one sole family and that they should relate with one another in the spirit of fraternity (cf. "Gaudium Et Spes," No. 24).

Therefore it is not licit, because it is not in accord with God's design, to use this gift in such a way that its benefits are to the advantage of only a few, while others, the immense majority, remain excluded. The imbalance is graver, and the injustice inherent therein cries louder, when that immense majority is condemned by that same state of affairs to a situation of want, poverty and life on the margins of society.

The very right to property is legitimate in itself, but in a Christian view of the world it must perform its function and respect its social end (cf. Speech to the Indian peasants at Cuilapan, Mexico, Jan. 28, 1979). So, in the use of goods possessed, the general destination given them by God and the requirements of the common good prevail over the advantage, sometimes even over what are not primary necessities, of private origin. This is true as well -- as I have already had the opportunity to

say -- when it is a question of the rural world and cultivation of the land, because the land was put at man's disposal by God.

We have just been listening to a reading from the first chapter of the Book of Genesis. In it God says, "Fill the earth and subdue it...I give you every seed-bearing plant...and every tree that has seed-bearing fruit on it to be your food" (Gen. 1,28-30).

The earth is man's because God entrusted it to him, and man masters it through his labor (cf. Gen. 1,28). So it is not admissible that in the general development of a society men and women who live in a rural area should be excluded from the true progress worthy of man. They are those exactly who are ready to make the earth productive through the toil of their hands and are much in need of land for feeding their families.

The Second Vatican Council of 15 years ago was the church taking account of herself and of the world. The council made reference exactly to the question with which we are concerned. It proclaimed: "In many areas, too, farmers experience special difficulties in raising products or in selling them...Country people must be helped...Otherwise...they will remain in the condition of lower-class citizens" ("Gaudium Et Spes," No. 66). It is not unthinkable that they may be reduced to even poorer circumstances.

A fundamental principle of the church's thought is that social organization is for service to man and not the contrary. This principle holds good for all and always. It applies chiefly to those who have received a mandate from society to guarantee the good of all.

The initiatives that they take ought to be initiatives for man's sake when they concern the agricultural sector. They ought to be so at the lawmaking level and on the level of the judiciary as well as on the level of safeguarding citizen's rights. A situation where the population -- that of the rural area, too -- sees its human dignity being disrespected is a situation that leads to ruin because it leaves the field open to other initiatives inspired by hatred and by violence.

5. Workers on the land like workers in any other branch of production are above all human persons. They ought always to remain such in their own and others' eyes on the level of ideas and in the practical order. They must have possibilities for realizing the potentials contained in their being, possibilities for "being more" and at the same time being treated in accordance with their human dignity. Since "work is for man and not man for work," a fundamental requirement wholly respectful of his dignity is that he should be able to draw necessary and sufficient means from his labor for meeting his family and social responsibilities decently. Man is never a mere "instrument" of production.

Thus, in a well-ordered political community justice and humanity do not go together with, and cannot be reconciled with, a certain abuse of liberty on the part of some. This abuse is linked exactly with a consumerist manner of behavior. It is not controlled by ethics, since it simultaneously limits others' liberty, that is, the liberty of those who suffer notorious want and find themselves

being pushed down into conditions of further misery and need (cf. "Redemptor Hominis," 16) in a gigantic version of the biblical parable of the rich man and the poor man Lazarus (cf. Lk. 16,19-31).

In that parable Christ does not condemn the rich man because he is rich or because he garbs himself luxuriously. He strongly condemns the rich man who had no consideration for poor Lazarus' state of penury, when Lazarus desired only to feed on crumbs falling from the festive table. Christ does not condemn simple possession of material goods. But his harshest words are for those who use their wealth in a egotistical way, without bothering about their neighbor who lacks what is necessary for him.

With those words Christ puts himself on the side of human dignity, on the side of those whose dignity is not respected, on the side of the poor. "How blessed are the poor in spirit, the reign of God is theirs" (Mt. 5,3). Yes, blessed are the poor, the poor in material goods who yet keep their dignity as men and women. Blessed are the poor, those who for Christ's sake have a special feeling for the brother or sister who suffers need, for the neighbor who suffers so many privations, including hunger, through lack of work, through the impossibility of bringing bring up his children in a worthy fashion.

Blessed are the poor, who know how to detach themselves from their possessions and their power so as to put them at the service of the needy, to commit themselves to the search for a just social order, to promote those changes of attitudes that are necessary for those on society's margins to find a place at the human family's table.

It is imperatively necessary that there be no privileged social strata in respect to goods of prime necessity: food, clothing, shelter, medical and social assistance, basic education, professional training, transportation, information, entertainment possibilities, religious life. It is likewise necessary for there to be no outstanding inequalities between urban and rural environments and that, where such are created, adequate measures shall be rapidly applied to eliminate or reduce them wherever possible. One and all must feel committed to this, individuals, social groups and public authorities at all levels.

6. Workerson the land, and other workers as well, may not under any pretext be deprived of the right to participate and communicate responsibly in the life of undertakings and organizations intended for defining and safeguarding their interests, likewise in the hard and dangerous march toward indispensable transformation of the structures of economic life, always for man's sake.

Such active presence on the part of workers at these various social levels to which their activities are linked always presupposes an economy in service of man with all the truth of his being a personal being. But clashes occur whenever liberty is confused with the instinct of individual or collective interests or with the instinct of strife and dominion. So, in order to overcome these clashes, whatever the ideological colors be that mark them out, and for such workers' participation to be effective and constructive, there is imperative need for previous conversion of minds, wills and hearts.

There is need for the conversion of man to the truth about man. Knowledge and acceptance of the truth are the basic condition for liberty. "Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free" (Jn. 8,32).

7. God's thought regarding the relationship of man to earth is expressed in biblical language in these terms: "The Lord then took the man and settled him in the garden of Eden, to cultivate and care for it" (Gen. 2,15). We read in another passage that he spoke as follows to the first human couple: "Fill the earth and subdue it" have dominion over creation (cf. Gen.1,28).

Now "to rule" and "cultivate" the earth is the principle that ought to be always observed by mankind in administering this gift of God. This principle lays down an absolutely obligatory line of action for all who are responsible for and concerned with the land question: persons vested with public powers, technicians, enterprisers and workers.

It happens, however, that "man often seems to see no other meaning in his natural environment than what serves for immediate use and consumption. Yet it was the Creator's will that man should communicate with nature as an intelligent and noble 'master' and 'guardian,' and not as a heedless 'exploiter' and 'destroyer'" ("Redemptor Hominis," No. 15).

At the sight of the immense resources and marvelous beauties of this great nation a cry springs from the soul: Cultivate and have care for your beloved Brazil. Use and master its resources,

cause them to render more for man's sake, the man of today and tomorrow. Here, as regards employment of that gift of God's which is the earth, much thought must be given to coming generations. A tribute must be paid, that of austerity, so as not to weaken, reduce or, even worse, make living conditions for future generations unbearable. Justice and humanity demand this.

8. One last word, especially for those who have the happiness of walking in Christ's light as they work. Labor is production, the source of economic goods, the means of gaining a living and so on. But it should also be understood and lived as duty, as love, as a source of honor, as prayer.

This applies to all workers, naturally, but it applies to you land workers in a special way. You are called to render a service to men, your brethren, in contact with nature. You work directly with God, the Creator and Father, in order that our planet -- Earth -- may be more and more in conformity with his designs, be the environment desired for all kinds of life: of plants, of beasts, of men above all.

See, the "Lord's are the earth and its fullness, the world and those who dwell in it" (Ps. 24,1). Let us do all in our power as "knowing and noble guards" that, as it serves man, "all on earth (may) worship and sing praise to you, sing praise to your name" always (Ps. 66,4).

I have spoken to you with an open heart for I am aware that the church in fidelity to her Lord knows that she must be open to human realities, must in-

terpret them in the light of the Gospel and cultivate in those realities the good news. In this way she tries to get men, when the case arises, to change their criteria for judging, their favorite values, the centers of their interest, their lines of thought, the sources of their inspiration and their life models, when these are in contrast with God's designs (cf. "Evangelii Nuntiandi," 19).

9. It is known that initiatives on a vast scale are being planned and put into practice in this country for agriculture. May it please God that a Christian humanism will always enlighten them, a true sense of man. Man is one and all of you and every one of those whom you represent here with your dignity as persons and children of God. There is an imposing necessity for promptness and profundity in facing a situation of which your silence tells with great eloquence. Do not let your moral and religious dignity ever be abased by acceptance of feelings such as hatred or desire for violence. Amen and peace!

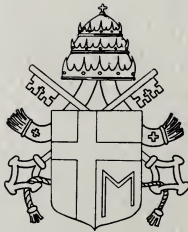
Raise your eyes to your Father and Lord of all. It is he that will give each the reward of what he does.

I pray for those other brothers of ours, I pray for you and with you, dear land worker brothers and sisters, in your name and in God's name, that there will be efforts at collaboration and concord, that all who have responsibility and are interested in the well-being of every man will seek and apply real, fitting and effective measures for satisfying the rights of the man on the land, so as to aid him. I

refer to public authorities at national, state and local levels, to groups, organizations and all men of good will, with the church's specific contribution in carrying out her mission. In this matter, whoever has more must feel more obliged to cooperate.

We are the family of the children of God. As your brother, I would say this to you, beloved peasants of Brazil: You are worth much. Preserve your human and religious wealth: love for the family, your sense of friendship and loyalty, your oneness with the most needy among you, your respect for the laws and for all that is rightful in social living, your love for good harmony and peace, your trust in God and your openness to the supernatural, your devotion to Our Lady, and more besides. Here, before a church dedicated to her under a title most dear to me -- that of Our Lady of Mount Carmel -- I pray to God through Our Lady that he may assist, comfort and help us all.

With my apostolic blessing.



"The spread of culture, the critical spirit, the publicity given to all questions and debates require fuller and deeper knowledge of the faith. Popular religion itself ought to be nourished with ever more extensive explanation of revealed truth, and it ought to be freed from elements that make it seem inauthentic."