

# A Pilgrim to the People of God

Following is the text of Pope John Paul II's address on the first anniversary of his election to the papacy.

"The bishop who visits the communities of his Church is the true pilgrim who arrives every time at that particular shrine of the Good Pastor, which is the People of God, participating in Christ's royal priesthood. This shrine, in fact, is every man, whose 'mystery' can be explained and solved only in the mystery of the Word incarnate".



I was offered the opportunity to pronounce the above-mentioned words in the Matilda chapel, when Pope Paul VI invited me to preach the spiritual exercises in the Vatican.

These words come to my mind again today, since they seem to contain what was the most essential content of my journey to Ireland and to the United States, a journey occasioned by the invitation of the Secretary General of the U.N.

This journey, in both its stages, was actually a real pilgrimage to the living shrine of the People of God.

If the teaching of the Second Vatican Council permits us to look in this way at every visit of the Bishop to a parish, the same can be said also of that visit of the Pope. I think I have a special duty to express myself on this subject. It is also my deep wish that those who received me, with such hospitality, may know that I tried to become intimate with that mystery that Christ, the Good Shepherd, has moulded and continues to mould in their souls, their history and their community. To highlight this, I have decided to interrupt, this Wednesday, the cycle of reflections on the words of Christ regarding the subject of marriage. We will resume it again in a week.

I wish in the first place to bear witness to the meeting with the mystery of the Church in the land of Ireland. I will never forget that place, in which we stopped for a short time, in the early morning hours, on Sunday, 30 Sept.: Clonmacnois. The ruins of the abbey and of the church speak of the life that once pulsated there. It is a question of one of those monasteries in which Irish monks not only implanted Christianity in the Emerald Isle, but also took it from there to the other countries of Europe. It is difficult to look at those ruins merely as a monument of the past; whole generations of Europe owe to them the light of the Gospel and the structural framework of their culture. Those ruins are still charged with a great mission. They still constitute a challenge. They still speak of that fullness of life to which Christ has called us. It is difficult for a pilgrim to arrive at those places without those traces of the apparently dead past revealing to him a permanent and everlasting

dimension of life. Here is Ireland: at the heart of the perennial mission of the Church, which St. Patrick started.

Following as a pilgrim in his footsteps, we move in the direction of the primatial see of Armagh, and we stop, on the way, at Drogheda, where, for the occasion, the relics of St. Oliver Plunkett, Bishop and Martyr, were solemnly displayed. Only by kneeling in front of those relics can one express the whole truth about historical and contemporary Ireland and also touch its wounds, confident that they will heal and not prevent the whole organism from pulsating with the fullness of life.

We also touch, therefore, the painful problems of today, but we do not cease our pilgrimage through that magnificent shrine of the People of God, which opens up before us, in so many places, in so many marvelous liturgical assemblies, during the celebrations of the Eucharist at Dublin, Galway, Knock (the Marian Sanctuary), Maynooth and Limerick. In particular I have and always will have present in my thought also the meeting with the President of Ireland, Patrick J. Hillery, and with the illustrious authorities of that nation. Let all those I met — the priests, missionaries, religious men and women, pupils, laity, married couples and parents, Irish youth, the sick — and above all my beloved brothers in the Episcopate — let them all remember that I was present in their midst as a pilgrim, visiting the Shrine of the Good Shepherd, who dwells in the whole People of God; that I walked through that magnificent river bed of the history of salvation, which from the times of St. Patrick has become the Emerald Isle, with head bent and a grateful heart, seeking together with them, the ways that lead to the future.

I wish to say the same thing also to my Brothers and Sisters beyond the ocean. Their Church is still young, because their great society is young; there have passed only two centuries of its history on the political map of the globe. I wish to thank them all for the welcome they gave me; for their response to this visit, this presence, necessarily a short one. I confess that I was surprised by this welcome and response. We persisted in pouring rain during the Mass for the young, the first evening, at Boston. The rain accompanied us along the streets of New York, among the skyscrapers. That rain did not prevent so many men of goodwill from persevering in prayer, from waiting for the moment of my arrival, for my word and my blessing.

Unforgettable for me are the districts of Harlem, with its negro population in the majority; South Bronx, with the newcomers from Latin-American countries; the meeting with the young in Madison Square Garden and in Battery Park in torrential rain and a raging storm, and in Shea stadium when the sun finally appeared. And the preceding day the vast Yankee Stadium, packed full for participation in the eucharistic liturgy. And then: illustrious Philadelphia, the first capital of the independent States with its bell of freedom, and perhaps nearly two million par-

having it imparted and receiving it become punishable of offenses."

The Pope continued: "I vigorously raise voice in union with the synod Fathers against all discrimination in the field of catechesis, and the same time make a pressing appeal to all those in authority to put a complete end to these constraints on human freedom in general and on religious freedom in particular."

The pontiff has frequently criticized restrictions on religious practice in nations such as his native Poland where dissemination of religious journals is limited. Recently, Polish bishops have been urging Catholics to listen to the Polish-language broadcasts of Vatican Radio to learn about Catholicism and developments in the Catholic world.

In the document, the Pope also warned against distortions of religion in some public and state school textbooks. He asked that care be taken "that every effort is made to insure that the presentation is truly objective and free from the distorting influence of ideological and political systems or of prejudices with claim to be scientific."

The document also takes a dim view of certain, unspecified theological research, asking theologians to realize that they "have a duty to take great care that people do not take for a certainty what on the contrary belongs to the area of questions of opinion of discussion among experts." Those teaching the faith, the Pope says, "must refuse to trouble the minds of the children and young people, at this stage of their catechesis, with outlandish theories, useless questions and unproductive discussions."

The text endorses an ecumenical dimension to catechesis, saying this could help lead to unity among the Christian churches.

Finally, the Holy Father gently chides priests on sermons. They "should be neither too long nor too short," he writes, and they "should always be carefully prepared, rich in substance and adapted to the hearers."

ticipants in the afternoon Mass, in the very centre of the city. And the meeting with rural America at Des Moines. Afterwards Chicago, in which it was possible, in a more appropriate way, to develop the analogy on the subject "e pluribus unum". Finally, the city of Washington, the capital of the United States, with all its heavy programme, up to the last Mass with the Capitol in the background.

The Bishop of Rome, in the steps of the Good Shepherd, entered as a pilgrim His sanctuary in the new continent and tried to live, together with you, the reality of the Church, which emerges from the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, with all the depth and rigour this doctrine brings with it. It seems, in fact, that all that was accompanied above all by great joy, at the fact that we are this Church; that we are the People, to whom the Father offers redemption and salvation in his Son and in the Holy Spirit. Joy at the fact that — among all the tensions of modern civilization, of the economy and politics — there exists precisely this dimension of human life on the earth; and that we participate in it. Although our attention is directed also to these tensions, which we wish to solve in a human and worthy way, the divine joy of the People, which becomes aware that it is the People of God, and that as such it seeks its own unity, is, however, greater and full of hope.

In this context, also the words spoken before the United Nations became a particular fruit of my pilgrimage over these important stages of the history of the whole Church and of Christianity. What else could I say before that supreme "Forum" of a political character, but what constitutes the very core of the Gospel message? The words of a great love for man, which lives in the communities of so many peoples and nations, within the frontiers of so many states and political systems. If political activity, in the dimensions of the single states and in international dimensions, must ensure a real primacy of man on earth, if it must serve his real dignity, the witness of the spirit and of truth borne by Christianity and the Church, is necessary. And therefore, on behalf of Christianity and the Church, I am grateful to all those who wished to listen to my words at UN, New York on Oct. 2, 1979.

In the same way I am deeply grateful for the welcome that the President of the United States, Jimmy Carter, gave me on Oct. 6, at the historic meeting in the White House with him and his dear family, and with all the high Authorities gathered there.

"We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty." This is what Christ taught his apostles. I, too, with these words that spring from my deepest conviction, conclude my allocution today, the necessity of which was dictated by the importance of my recent journey. Let me repay, at least in this way, the great debt I have contracted to the Good Shepherd and to those who opened up the ways of my peregrination.

## Papal Exhortation: Church Has Inalienable Right To Spread The Faith

By Pamela Mendels  
Religious News Service Correspondent

In a lengthy document released Oct. 25, Pope John Paul II asserted the "inalienable right" of the church to teach and spread the faith, and scored governments which try to limit this right.

The 100-page Apostolic Exhortation, titled *Catechesi Tradendae*, grew out of the work of the 1977 World Synod of Bishops in Rome which dealt with the topic "Catechesis in Our Time with Special Reference to Children and Young People." Then the Cardinal Archbishop of Cracow, Poland, Pope John Paul participated in the synod, where the problems of religious instruction and training were discussed extensively.

"It is clear that the Church has always looked on catechesis as a sacred duty and an inalienable right," the Pope wrote, later adding that "the right is being violated by many states, even to the point that imparting catechesis,

**KAKE 1688 CLIFFORD AVE.**  
 near Goodman  
**CORNER**  
 3 tier serves up to 100, \$35 PHONE  
 4 tier serves 175 to 200, \$50 482-1133  
 3 tier whipped cream, custard filling  
 serves up to 100, \$55 We Deliver

Decorator cakes, whipped cream & strawberry, lemon, pineapple, custard filling: 1/4 sheet, \$6.00; 1/2 sheet, \$9.00; full sheet, \$16.00.  
 Decorator cakes, butter cream frostings, half sheet \$8.00, full sheet \$14

**BUYING NOW**  
**ORIENTAL RUGS**  
**Immediate Cash**

for  
 antiques, semi-antiques  
 whole estates or individual pieces  
 any size, any condition  
 call any time

**DARVISH**  
 271-8520