



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF POPE FRANCIS
TO UKRAINIAN GREEK-CATHOLIC PILGRIMS
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE TRANSFERRAL OF SAINT JOSAPHAT 'S RELICS
TO THE VATICAN BASILICA**

*Vatican Basilica
Monday, 25 November 2013*

Dear Pilgrims who have come from Ukraine,

I was delighted to receive the invitation of His Beatitude Sviatoslav Shevchuk, Major Archbishop of Kyiv-Haly? and of the Synod of the Greek-Catholic Church in Ukraine, to join you during this pilgrimage to the tomb of St Josaphat, Bishop and Martyr, on the 50th anniversary of the translation of his relics to the Vatican Basilica. With joy I also welcome the Delegation of Byzantines from Belorussia.

On 22 November 1963 Pope Paul VI had the body of St Josaphat placed under the altar dedicated to St Basil the Great, near the tomb of St Peter. Indeed, the holy Martyr from Ukraine had chosen to embrace the monastic life according to the Rule of St Basil. And he did so in a profound way, committing himself also to the reform of his own Order, a reform which led to the birth of the Basilian Order of St Josaphat. At the same time, first as a simple layman, then as a monk and finally as Archbishop, he dedicated all of his strength to the union of the Church under the guidance of St Peter, Prince of the Apostles.

Dear brothers and sisters, the memory of this holy Martyr speaks to us about the Communion of Saints, about the communion of life among those who belong to Christ. It is a reality that gives us a foretaste of eternal life, since an important aspect of eternal life consists in the joyous fraternity which is shared by all the saints. “Everyone will love everyone else as himself — St Thomas Aquinas teaches — and therefore will rejoice in another’s good as in his own. So it follows that the

happiness and joy of each grows in proportion to the joy of all" (*Conferences on the Creed*).

If such is the communion of the Church, every aspect of our Christian life can be enlivened by the desire to build together, to work together, to learn from one another, to bear witness to the faith together. Jesus Christ, the Risen Lord, accompanies us along this journey and is its centre. This desire for communion spurs us on to seek to understand the other, to respect the other, and also to welcome and offer fraternal correction.

Dear brothers and sisters, the best way to celebrate St Josaphat is to love one another, and to love and serve the unity of the Church. The courageous witness of so many recent martyrs, who constitute a great wealth and consolation for your Church, also supports us in this.

I hope that the profound communion which you seek to deepen each day within the Catholic Church may help you to build bridges of fraternity also with the other Churches and ecclesial communities in Ukraine and abroad where your communities are present. Through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St Josaphat, may the Lord accompany and bless you always!

And please do not forget to pray for me. Thank you!