



The Holy See

LETTER OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II TO THE ARCHBISHOP OF MONTEVIDEO

To our revered Brother in the Episcopate,

Archbishop of Montevideo The cultural and religious celebrations planned in all the ecclesiastical territorial divisions of Uruguay to commemorate the institution of the local Hierarchy, are about to conclude. We were very happy to know that this joyful commemoration will culminate on 8 December with a Mass concelebrated in the Holy Cathedral Church of Montevideo. On this great day we wish to be close to you and to our other brothers in the episcopate, pastors of the Church in Uruguay, to priests, religious and faithful, in order to congratulate you affectionately and to wish, with the prince of the Apostles, that "grace and peace may be multiplied to you" (1 Pet 1:2). It is precisely this grace and peace which, as the inexhaustible sap of the Spirit, have nourished constantly, generation after generation, God's field, God's building, which you are (cf. 1 Cor 3:1 ff.). Let our sincere memory and gratitude go, therefore, to so many servants of Christ who, following his example of obedience to the divine plans, did their utmost, accepting toils and sacrifices, to proclaim the mysteries of salvation. One planted, the other watered; some laid the foundations, others built; but all worked together for God, who gave the growth! May the Lord be praised for such a blessing! Our words today are intended, in the first place, as an encouragement for you to continue to collaborate with renewed inner spirit in the construction of the family of God which we all are, we men, in whom the Word made flesh willed to dwell so that we might behold his glory (cf. Jn 1:14). You Pastors of the Church know very well that, through the vocation to apostolic service, we have been entrusted with a demanding and fundamental task: the mission of making all peoples disciples and preaching the Gospel to all creatures (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 4). Yes, we must proclaim tirelessly "the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20, 24), "... as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life" (Phil 2: 16) in order that men, reconciled in Christ and grafted onto him, may become the "new man", living stones, fellow-citizens and members of the household of God, built upon the foundations of the apostles (cf. Eph. 2:11 ff.). Let us not forget that in our person, the person of the Bishops, who are assisted by the priests, Christ is present in the midst of the faithful (*Lumen Gentium*, 21). Therefore as witnesses of this presence, teachers and fathers of the community, we have to show and faithfully revive in it the image of the true Christ: Christ who saves; Christ who instils hope in mankind; Christ who welcomes the poor and sinners with love; Christ who prays; Christ our Pasch, who, by his death and resurrection, opened the gates of the Kingdom to us: the kingdom of truth, justice, love and peace, which will find its complete fulfilment in him. As a testimony of affection and as an incentive to build in this way, in truth and holiness, the People of God in Uruguay, we present a chalice to this Church of Montevideo, the cradle of the other communities of Uruguay. And asking the Blessed Virgin of the Thirty Three to care with motherly love "for the

brethren of her Son who still journey on earth surrounded by dangers and difficulties, until they are led to their happy fatherland" (*Lumen Gentium*, 62), we willingly bless you, the other Bishops and the faithful people in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. *Vatican, 27 November 1978.*

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