



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC PILGRIMAGE TO COLOMBIA MEETING WITH THE SICK AND THE HANDICAPPED ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II *Cathedral of Castries (Saint Lucia)*

Monday, 7 July 1986

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

1. "GRACE TO YOU and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ". It is a joy to come to the Cathedral of the Archdiocese of Castries and to greet all of you who are gathered here today, especially the sick, the handicapped and the elderly, and those who care for them.

One of the most striking aspects of the public ministry of Jesus was his special love for the suffering. He willingly went out to the sick and the crippled, the deaf and the blind. He touched, blessed and healed them. He forgave their sins. He offered them consolation and hope by proclaiming to them the Gospel of salvation. Above all, through his own suffering and death and by the victory of his Resurrection, he revealed the fullness of the Father's love and opened the way to eternal life.

2. Through the hands and hearts of his followers, and in the word of God and the sacraments, Christ continues today to touch those who suffer. At the same time, he invites the sick and the afflicted themselves to share in the mission of the Church, to bring to completion in their own bodies what is lacking in the suffering of Christ.

3. As we gather today in this Cathedral and as we ponder the mystery of human suffering and human weakness, I remind you of the words of Saint Paul: "You are God's temple and... God's Spirit dwells in you". No amount of suffering can obscure this truth of our faith. Nothing can take away or destroy your human dignity. For your bodies have become dwelling-places for God. The Lord has made his home in you.

4. I assure you of my prayers for you each day. And I also ask for your own prayers, for myself and for my ministry, for the needs of the Church and the world. In a particular way, I ask you to offer your prayers and suffering for the work of evangelization, so that all the world may come to know and believe in Jesus Christ the Son of God, who has become our Redeemer and our Lord.

And I encourage all of you who make up this Archdiocese of Castries to be ever more aware of the needs of the sick, the poor and the handicapped and to do everything in your power to help them in the name of Jesus. I ask God to sustain you in your generous activities and to prosper the work of your zealous associations.

To all of you and to your families and loved ones I impart my Apostolic Blessing.

Mwen car manday Bon Dye pour bennie zot toute en nom le Pere et le Fils et le Sainte Esprit.

(May God bless you, in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit).

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