



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER JOHN PAUL II TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CIRCOLO SAN PIETRO

Monday 5 June 2000

Dear Members of the Circolo San Pietro!

1. I am pleased to welcome you again this year and I greet you affectionately. I am grateful to your Chaplain, Archbishop Ettore Cunial, and to your President, Marquis Marcello Sacchetti, whom I thank for his courteous words on behalf of you all. Today's meeting is, as always, a welcome opportunity for expressing again my sincere appreciation of the committed and faithful service you offer to the Church and to the Pope in concrete charitable projects for our neighbour. Thank you for your continuing witness of love for the Apostolic See and of active charitable solidarity towards our city's neediest brothers and sisters.

2. In fact, your praiseworthy association is penetrating the heart of Rome more and more deeply, spurred by the desire to respond to the urgent needs of the poorest and most forgotten people. The various interventions of solidarity undertaken for those who suffer from the lack of necessities include the new project you have begun for the Great Jubilee of providing volunteer service each day in the soup kitchens set up at the patriarchal basilicas. I once again praise your generous acceptance of my invitation to collaborate with the project "*The Pope's Charity for the Jubilee*".

I also thank you for all you do in the parishes, hospitals and shelters, never tiring of supporting those who are suffering in body and soul, to bring them the consoling certainty that Christ is the Saviour of all.

The Peter's Pence collection which you are personally presenting to me, as you do each year, is a further sign of your quiet but concrete sharing in the concerns of the Holy See, called to respond ever more effectively to the increasing appeals of the neediest in so many parts of the world. Your laudable willingness to collect funds for the Pope's charity is a highly appreciated sign of

communion with the universal ministry of Peter's Successor. Continue on this path, aware that you are rendering a useful service to Christ and his Church.

3. Dear members, we are now close to the Solemnity of Pentecost. I invite you to ask God for the gift of his Spirit, who is the living flame of love and the source of light and inner strength. Let the Holy Spirit guide all your projects and enliven all your efforts. In constant prayer you will find the indispensable energy for making your apostolate effective, so that the people you meet will encounter a reflection of God's love and will open themselves to the newness of the Gospel.

Do not stop in the face of difficulties. Continue instead to meet the needs of your poorest brethren without pause, thus enabling them to see the heavenly Father's love. The divine Master warns us: "As often as you did it for one of my least brothers, you did it for me" (*Mt 25: 40*).

May Mary, the incomparable and perfect example of the Church's life and mission, the Mother who gives birth to Christians and leads them to the perfection of charity (cf. *Lumen gentium*, nn. 63-65), always protect and guide you.

For my part, I assure you of a remembrance in my prayer and cordially impart a special Blessing to you and your families.

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