

## PRIESTLY EXAMPLE REINFORCES THE APOSTOLATE

Venerable Brothers and dear Sons,

Most cordially do we greet you who, together with a throng of other pilgrims, for the first time since the war which raged throughout the world, have made your way to this city from Our beloved Hungary and have desired to come to Us.

There is cause for joy in this family gathering between Us, to whom is entrusted the supreme apostolic service, and you, Venerable Brothers in the episcopate, and you, beloved sons, who are priests. But in this meeting not only is there joy to be expressed; it also pertains to Us to address a few words to you, words which well up from a paternal and loving heart and which may serve to sustain you.

First of all there comes to mind the question of the priestly life which, so long as it is saintly, wholehearted and a shining example to others, has always been and is the foundation of every kind of apostolic activity. In this our own day, how very true are the words of the Apostle St. Paul: "We are made a spectacle to the world, and to angels and to men" (I Cor. 4, 10). It behooves us then to remember that the virtues with which the priest is enriched, or the defects for which he is responsible, are not only of benefit, or of harm, to himself but react upon the whole Church: that is to say, through the virtuous things he does enrich the whole ecclesial community, whereas his failings inflict harm on it, tend to ruin its good name, make it less easy to be believed in. So it is that by the example of his own life the priest has to bear witness to what he teaches. Moreover, by example of this kind the most powerful encouragement is given to vocations, of which the Church, especially in Hungary, is in the greatest need.

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\* During the audience on 22 May granted to bishops and priests from dioceses of Hungary on pilgrimage to Rome at the close of the millennial celebrations of St. Stephen, King of Hungary, the Holy Father addressed the pilgrims in these words.

### PRESERVE UNITY

May We also warmly remind you to preserve unity amongst yourselves. We mean that unity which Christ our Lord earnestly prayed for at the Last Supper, asking "that they may be one" (Jn. 17, 21). This unity begins with the faith whereby we believe the Church to be of divine origin and the Holy Spirit to be unfailingly present therein.

That unity joins you in the first place to this Apostolic See and to the Successor of St. Peter. Cleave with unshaken trust to the same Apostolic See which has no other object in view in its whole mode of action than the well-being of all the children of the Church, and of all its parts, and so of you too.

The unity of which We are speaking binds the bishops together closely amongst themselves insofar as they, by their charity, sincerity and above all their fidelity towards God and concern for their duties, are at one with one another in their action, in their sermons, in their single mode of dealing with whatever promotes the good of the Church and maintains its rights. For when the consecrated Pastors form, as it were, a single structure, their spiritual strength is increased.

Finally, this unity must thrive vigorously as between bishops and priests. In this context it is helpful to quote the words of Vatican Council II: "All priests, both diocesan and religious, share in and exercise with the bishops the priesthood of Christ... Wherefore they constitute one priestly body and one family, whose father is the Bishop" (Decr. *Christus Dominus*, n. 28). Now, as you well know, a family is in settled unity when the paternal authority is benignly and at the same vigilantly exercised, and when it is met with obedience, reverence, compliance and love. On the same firm foundation must communion between the Bishop and the clergy be established.

This unity, however, which by reason of human defects even in the ordinary course of life is not preserved without considerable labour, as experience shows, may become much more difficult in extraordinary circumstances of the times; but then it is of the greatest necessity and is productive of much spiritual fruit. We beg of you, therefore, that, faithful to your God-given vocation, you guard this unity, keeping it safe from the pitfalls which endanger it and exercising without fail the virtues belonging to the priesthood and most of all putting into practice a zealous concern for self-dedication or, as it is called, "the spirit of sacrifice".

We do not doubt that through this sense of unity you will also be keeping in touch with those brethren of yours in the priesthood who, from various causes, are not able to work in the vineyard of the Lord. Bishops and priests will not suffer them to be deserted but with charitable concern will give them generous help. Pastoral duty meets with no small hindrances and difficulties in these days. The gravest danger of all, however, may threaten from the fact that the labourers in that same vineyard may be overcome by weariness and loss of heart. There are some who, because of many setbacks and vexations, feel unable to cope, feel that they are not equal to the task. Against this, reliance must be put on what they are able to do in the circumstances and on the expectation, which Christian hope will give, of better things to come.

### RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

In this field of pastoral endeavour there is one special matter about which We are concerned. Namely, that of religious instruction. As you are all aware, pastors of souls are bound as a conscientious duty to give this to everyone and to insist on the necessity of it in case of those who neglect it. We trust that you will diligently take every measure to ensure that this religious instruction will go ahead in your native land. Undoubtedly difficulties are not wanting to make this element of pastoral duty sometimes most arduous; but these difficulties must not be used as an excuse and lead perhaps to inertia. Faith and zeal must be afire in priests, spurring them on to provide every kind of pastoral aid and also to seize every opportunity open to priestly intervention within the existing social order of things in Hungary. Nor must the special and very necessary aspect thereof be forgotten which concerns the instruction of the children in the family.

### FAMILY CRISIS

Having made mention of the family, We cannot do other than speak of the crisis affecting the institution of family life, a crisis from which your own beloved country also is not immune. To give an example, in a certain Budapest periodical there was published recently the number of known abortions, divorces, and suicides (that is to say, of people who had taken their own lives). Such facts should move us to the quick. And if, as We understand, the public authorities are striving to deal with this state of affairs, the Church ought also to be urgently at work in the

same sphere, one which is so very closely allied with moral teaching.

Venerable brothers and dear sons,

You decided as it were to crown the solemnities, organized for the millennial commemoration of Saint Stephen the King, in this city of Rome from which, as from a spring of living water, the Catholic Church flowed into Hungary. You have foregathered at the tomb of Peter in order to draw new strength and to be confirmed in your purpose to live faithfully in accordance with the vocation God has bestowed on you. We earnestly desire and We beg of the Giver of all good things that, with the outpouring as it were of a new Pentecost, the Catholic Church in Hungary may prove to be a spiritual leaven making for prosperity and progress in every department of life.

That is what We have to say to you, being moved by sincere love and pastoral solicitude. To conclude, We invoke the Apostolic Blessing, pledge of copious gifts from the Holy Spirit, upon you here present and upon all your brother priests who, while remaining in the home country, are with you in mind and heart on this pilgrimage.

### EPISCOPAL ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES

Let us pray for our Bishops on the occasion of their ordination anniversaries.

Most Rev. Teodulfo Domingo

July 2, 1957

Most Rev. Carmelo Morales

July 5, 1967

Most Rev. Emiliano Madangeng

July 21, 1971

Most Rev. Juan C. Sison

July 25, 1947

Most Rev. Alejandro Olalia

July 25, 1949

Most Rev. Manuel del Rosario

July 25, 1955

Most Rev. Pedro Bantigue

July 25, 1961

Most Rev. Antonio Mabutas

July 27, 1961