



The Holy See

HOMILY OF POPE JOHN PAUL II FOR THE FUNERAL MASS OF CARDINAL JAN PIETER SCHOTTE

Friday, 14 January 2005

1. *"Blessed are the peacemakers..."* (Mt 5: 9). Christ's words enlighten and comfort us at this solemn liturgy with which we take our leave of our venerable Brother, dear Cardinal Jan Pieter Schotte.

He was a man of peace! He made the value of peace one of the qualities of his long and busy service to the universal Church, and especially to the Holy See. He was so profoundly convinced that Christians must witness to peace that he chose as his episcopal motto: *"Parare viam Domino pacis"* (Prepare the way for the Lord of peace). We can recognize in his motto the reference to St John the Baptist, Patron of the Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary to which he belonged. The task of the Baptist, in fact, was to "prepare the way for the Lord" (cf. Lk 1: 76). Cardinal Schotte chose to add the explicit mention of peace, juxtaposing it with the name "Lord" - *"Parare viam Domino pacis"* - almost as if to underline that *only by accepting Christ and his Gospel is it possible to attain true peace* (cf. Wis 3: 3).

2. After holding important offices in his religious Family, ever generous and untiring, the late Cardinal made *his many endowments of intelligence, humanity and spirituality* available to the Roman Curia for more than 30 years in various capacities. I am thinking first of all of his work at the Secretariat of State, then at the Pontifical Commission "Iustitia et Pax", from which I subsequently summoned him to take on the role of General Secretary of the Synod of Bishops. Nor can I ever forget all he did as President of the Labour Office of the Apostolic See. *As a tireless artisan of communion*, he collaborated actively in the universal pastoral concern of the Successor of Peter.

3. Let us remember our dear and venerable Brother as a *witness of the love* that comes from God and constitutes the foundation of the Church's unity (cf. I Jn 3: 14-16). May we be comforted by the hope that he is now contemplating face to face the "Lord of peace" whom he so deeply loved and generously served throughout his life.

May the Merciful Lord welcome him into his Kingdom of peace. May the Immaculate Virgin accompany him as he goes to receive the prize promised to good and faithful servants of the Gospel. Amen!

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