



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF POPE JOHN PAUL II TO THE ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE OF BOSSEY

Thursday, 16 February 1984

Dear Friends from Bossey,

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you" (*Rom 16, 20*). Welcome to Rome! I am especially pleased to receive you here today because for the past five months you have reflected a great deal in your Graduate School on the theme: "The Visible Unity of the Church in a Divided World".

In our world today the forces of strife and division sometimes seem stronger than the will for reconciliation and peace. As nations and groups continue to draw apart into postures of aggression, it is vital that the hope of peace and the attitudes which can secure it should shine forth in the lives of people. Christians together should be a living sign in the world of God's will for peace and unity in the human family, by their words and their deeds proclaiming that all things are to be reconciled through Jesus Christ and for him, everything in heaven and everything on earth (*Col 1, 20*).

So our present situation makes it urgent in a new way that all who follow him should give practical obedience to his will for his followers, "that they may be one" (*Io 17, 22*). It is a grief indeed that Christians are not yet united in the profession of the one apostolic faith and therefore cannot yet celebrate together the one Eucharist. However, although that full visible unity must be our urgent goal, we have already a fundamental unity in the communion which is a share in the triune life of God and which comes to us through our one baptism into the death and the Resurrection of Christ. Do we take that seriously enough? It ought to be the motive which impels us to find the right ways to work for a full visible unity. It ought also to impels us to work together in every way possible and to express even now that which already unites us and which can be the source of peace in the world.

Quite soon you will go back to your own countries and your own Churches and communities. May our Lord keep alive in your hearts the renewed vision of the unity he wills for his followers and enable you to share it with those among whom you will work. May he bless you and your families and keep you faithful to himself.

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