



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
TO THE OFFICERS AND STAFF
OF THE COMMISSION ON FAITH AND ORDER
OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES**

Thursday, 30 March 1989

Dear Friends in Christ,

I am pleased to welcome you, the officers and staff of the *Commission on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches*, and to express encouragement for your work. Yours is a truly important and delicate task. It is important because you seek to serve the goal of all ecumenical activity, namely, the visible unity of all Christians in one faith and one Eucharistic fellowship. And it is delicate because you seek this goal within a multilateral context, in a dialogue between representatives of the broadest range of Churches and Ecclesial Communities. The Catholic Church constantly renews its commitment to fostering the unity which Christ himself desired for all his followers (Cfr. *Io.* 17, 21).

You are looking now towards the next Plenary Meeting of your Commission which will take place in Budapest next August. There you will review many activities, including the progress of the major studies now being undertaken. Besides *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, these include a study: "Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today", and another on "The Unity of the Church and the Renewal of Human Community". These efforts are important because the goal of Christian unity cannot be reached without agreement on the apostolic faith and the nature of the Church.

We can see the dedicated work that you are undertaking as an attempt to bring divided Christians closer to the vision of unity presented by Saint Paul: "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call. One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all" (*Eph.* 4, 4-6).

I pray that your efforts will be fruitful.

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