



The Holy See

JOURNEY TO INDIA

**ADDRESS OF POPE PAUL VI
AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE EPISCOPAL ORDINATION
OF NEW BISHOPS**

Thursday, 3 December 1964

Venerable Brothers and beloved sons,

Let us seriously contemplate the fact that Jesus Christ is present.

Jesus Christ, alive.

Jesus Christ. He Who is the eternal and consubstantial Son of God; Who is also the Son of Mary, true man, our Brother.

He is here in the Eucharistic Mystery which this Congress celebrates. He is really present, not merely represented, not only invoked remembered. He Himself is here, real and unique; only under the sacramental appearances is He multiplied. And He is multiplied in order to be communicated to each of us.

We cannot remain silent; We must exclaim: Glory to Thee, O Lord! Thanks to Thee, O Friend of men! O Master! O Bread of Life! O Saviour! We humbly acknowledge Thee! We believe in Thee! We love Thee!

Contemplating in Our heart the Blessed Eucharist considered as “ a pledge of future glory “, that glory in which we shall see God as He is in His very essence, We recall the words of a great poet, son of this land which today, O Jesus, is your home:

“ Day after day, O Lord of my life, shall I stand before thee, face to face?

With folded hands, O Lord of all worlds, shall I stand before thee, face to face?

Under thy great sky, in solitude and silence, with humble heart, shall I stand before thee, face to face?

In this laborious world of thine, tumultuous with toil and with struggle, among hurrying crowds, shall I stand before thee, face to face ” (Rabindranath Tagore).

How is this possible?

It is possible because divine powers have been communicated to some among us. The Priesthood of Christ was transmitted to some of His disciples, who thus became instruments of His action, heirs of His mission, vicars of His work.

This other mystery of the presence of Christ among men is also celebrated here today. It is celebrated in Our humble person as the Vicar of Christ; it is celebrated in the holy persons of you, O Bishops and priests here present.

Priests of Christ! Bishops, successors of the Apostles! Let us together confess our humbleness and our greatness, just as Mary, the exquisite Mother of God, while proclaiming her humility as His handmaid, exalted the great things which God did to her and with her.

Let us take notice of the event which is now taking place here through Our hands, transformed into the instrument of the hand of God, namely: the event of transmission. We have transmitted the fulness of the Priesthood of Jesus Christ to these Our Brothers, whom we shall from now on call Bishops, that is: the Pastors and Shepherds, of the believers, and for the people who do not yet believe.

We have transfused into them the Holy Spirit.

We have transmitted to them Our episcopal powers.

We have associated them with Ourselves in Our awesome mission, the mission of evangelizing souls, the mission of sanctifying them, the mission of guiding them.

And We have chosen them from the five parts of the world, so that it may be clear that We are obedient to the love of Christ; that immense love, pouring forth upon all peoples, upon all the men of this earth. From this point on the globe, which has been the source and fountainhead of numberless streams of peoples and of civilizations, We greet India, We greet all of Asia, We greet

the world. You, the new Bishops, are Our greeting. Just as Christ, Whose ministry We now personify, said to His disciples when He had made them Apostles, that is, messengers of His word and His grace, so We say to you, who are consecrated to that same mission: “ Go, preach the message: The kingdom of heaven is at hand! . . . ” as you enter the house that welcomes you, salute it thus: “ Peace be to this house! ” (*Matth.* 10, 7, 12).

You are bearers of peace: how humble and how human is your mission! It is not arms, nor riches, nor pride of conquest and glory that are your strength, but the Word of God, the Gospel!

Let your words echo the message of the divine truths, which as through a glass, darkly, are evoked by the words adopted by this great nation: «Truth alone triumphs, not falsehood. The divine path to liberation has been laid with truth, which the seers who have overcome desire tread, and wherein also is that supreme treasure to be gained by truth» (*Mundaka Upanishad*).

But even more, love is your strength.

Shepherds of souls, you have nothing to ask; but you have everything to give: your own selves.

Your authority derives from this, that you can call every man you meet your friend; and if he responds to you, you will call him brother and son.

Your wisdom will be twofold: divine and human. As your prophecy, you will have the doctrine which the divine Master taught us. You will have the ability to understand the heart of man, his greatness, his folly, his sufferings, his misery; your knowledge and science will be the science of life.

Go, then, Shepherds, on all the roads of the earth; go, reveal to the peoples their dignity, their freedom, their mission on this earth and in the next world. Your journey will not be an easy one, but do not fear, for the Lord is with you.

Wheresoever you go, there will be renewed the mystery of that Presence of God which we celebrate: here today. Thus, with the elect, the faithful who will come to surround you, you will mark off each hour of human history, until the end of time, with this supreme desire and this supreme certitude: “Come, Lord Jesus, come!” (*Apoc.* 22, 20).

Invoking this grace from the loving heart of Our Eucharistic Master, We bestow upon you all Our affectionate Apostolic Blessing.

Copyright © Dicastero per la Comunicazione - Libreria Editrice Vaticana