



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS PAUL VI TO THE GRAND MASTER OF THE ORDER OF MALTA*

Thursday, 10 July 1975

This year, too, we have the great pleasure of receiving in audience the Grand Master of the Order of Malta and the members of the Sovereign Council accompanying him. But the satisfaction at today's meeting becomes all the greater and more sincere because we have in this way the opportunity to express to you personally our thanks for the willing and active contribution that the Order has made to the course of the Holy Year by making men and equipment available for the continuous operation of a First Aid post at the Vatican Basilica.

The initiative has turned out to be opportune, may more indispensable, both on account of the efficiency of the services, in the ever new needs that the enormous influx of pilgrims, particularly on certain days of the week, continually presents from this point of view, and on account of the care with which they are offered.

We are happy, therefore, to tell you how grateful we are. The Order's spirit of dedication has now found also this form of commitment, even though it is a temporary one, to bear witness publicly to that impetus of charity, inspired by the Gospel and handed down from its purest centuries-old traditions, which animate it from within. It is a sign of vitality, of spiritual youth, of generous adaptation to the needs of the time.

We trust that this spirit of service of which Christ is the supreme model for all of us (cf. *In 13*, 1-17), will continue to arouse, even after the Jubilee, a fervour of beneficial initiatives in favour of our suffering and needy neighbour. The needs are great and they are growing every day. The hidden poverty of the large urban centres as well as the necessity of promoting development – hospitals, houses, schools – among the peoples who are aiming as a full equality of rights with the more privileged peoples, are the acid test of the faithful today. For them the Gospel must really be an inexhaustible programme and a pressing appeal to see and serve Jesus in the humblest of his

brothers (cf. *Mt* 25. 40-45): the suffering, the poor, the outcasts, the illiterate, lepers, etc.

We heartily encourage all the efforts that the well-deserving Order is making and will wish to increase as a perennial memory of its commitment in this Holy Year: and we impart to all those present here, as well as to all the members scattered all over the world, our special Apostolic Blessing.

* ORa n°30 p.5.
