

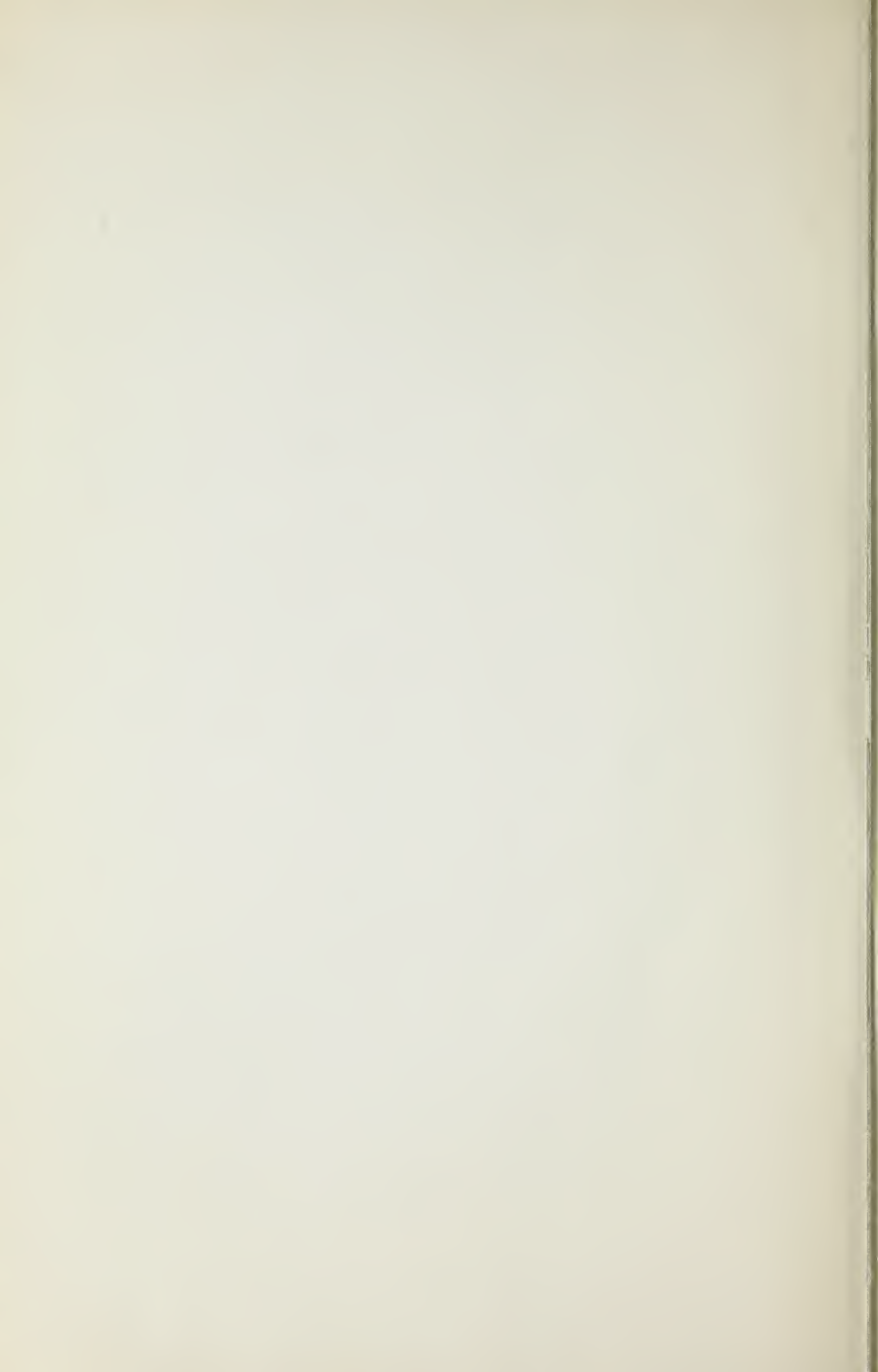
Holy year, 1975

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HOLY YEAR 1975



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HOLY YEAR

1975

A Compilation of Documents and Messages

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INTRODUCTION

What is the Holy Year?

by

William Ryan

In pre-Exilic Judaism every 50th year was a Jubilee Year, or year of remission, in which debts were pardoned and slaves freed. The medieval popes came to apply such a custom in the Church, decreeing a Holy Year, a period in which a solemn plenary indulgence is granted to the faithful under certain conditions and special faculties are given to confessors. The Holy Year normally begins and ends with special sacred ceremonies intended to improve the religious life of the faithful.

The first Holy Year in the Catholic tradition began on December 24, 1300, when large crowds visited St. Peter's Basilica. At that time Pope Boniface VIII issued a decree which determined that every 100 years a universal jubilee should be celebrated. Subsequent popes progressively shortened the intervals between Holy Years until finally, in 1470, Pope Paul II reduced the time to 25 years, a custom which has remained to this day, though extraordinary Holy Years can be proclaimed at any time. Also in the 15th century were prescribed the ceremonies that are observed essentially even today: the Pope opens the Holy Door of St. Peter's and appoints three cardinals to do the same in the other basilicas, using assigned rites and prayers. At the end of the Holy Year, the Porta Santa is again walled up. The last Holy Year was celebrated by Pope Pius XII in 1950, when unprecedented crowds thronged into Rome.

Great pomp and ceremony have accompanied many of the Holy Year celebrations, but essentially they have been manifestations of piety. The present Holy Year is concerned in a special way with the interior life of the spirit and is meant to promote works of piety, penance and charity as a sign of renewal in faith.

Unlike previous Holy Years, which were first celebrated in Rome and then extended to other communities and dioceses, the present Holy Year was first proclaimed for all the local churches, with activities culminating in Rome in 1975. In this sense the Holy Year is indeed unique.

Pope Paul set the tone for the new Holy Year in an address on May 9, 1973. After saying that the theme of the Holy Year is "reconciliation," and that the event should bring "spiritual well-being to every conscience and indirectly to the attitude of society," the Pope said:

"According to the centuries-old custom, the Holy Year has its focal point in Rome. And it will still be so, but with this innovation. The conditions prescribed for acquiring special spiritual benefits will this time be anticipated and granted to the local Churches, so that the whole Church spread throughout the world may immediately be able to profit from this great occasion of renewal and reconciliation. In this way the whole Church will be better able to prepare for the climax and conclusions of the Holy Year, which will be celebrated in Rome in the year 1975, and which will give to the traditional pilgrimage to the tombs of the Apostles its traditional meaning for those who are able and wish to make the pilgrimage."

"On former occasions, the extension of the Holy Year came after its celebration in Rome; now this extension will precede the celebration," the Pope stated. "Everyone can see how this innovation also includes an intention of honoring with more evident and effective communion the local Churches which are living members of the one universal Church of Christ."

Above all, the Holy Father has said, the Holy Year seeks the renewal of man and his reconciliation with God. And these are things which take place "in the depths of the soul, in the interior sanctuary, where conscience is called upon to bring about conversion, or 'metanoia,' by means of faith and repentance and to aim at the fullness of charity."

Pope Paul has established a Central Committee for the Holy Year whose purpose is to provide a unifying element and assistance to the work of the national committees which have been set up by episcopal conferences throughout the world. The Central

Committee has suggested the following are principal objectives to be attained in the Holy Year:

—A recommitment to conscience and a personal reflection upon the human and Christian vocation and upon the demands arising from worship and faith in God.

—A consideration of the problem of sin, of conversion and of salvation proposed in terms which are adequate to the mentality, condition and needs of the present-day world.

—A re-evaluation of penance as an essential component of the Christian spirit and a restatement of the Sacrament of Penance as a means to nourish the spirit in forms of administration which are, at the same time, both practical and faithful to the genuine traditions of the Church as well as to the psychological and sociological conditions of modern man.

—A fitting emphasis on the role to be played by penance, whether as a sacrament or an element in Christian living, in attaining reconciliation with God and with our fellowmen both in the Christian community and in the entire human family.

—A constant reminder that Christ is the Savior, from whom comes every grace, faith, conversion, good works, perseverance and rededication.

—A strengthening of the union with Christ which should exist in the individual conscience, in the interrelationships within the Church and among the Churches.

—A reaffirmation of the mission and the obligation of Christians to live in the world and in every sphere of action as true workers for unity and peace following the Gospel way of brotherhood and forgiveness, introducing into each area of life and into each sense of values the Christian spirit of charity.

Various initiatives have been undertaken at all levels of the Churches throughout the world in connection with the Holy Year.

At the parish level, some churches have held parish missions, either in the traditional form or following new patterns, in order to awaken in the faithful a feeling for the objectives of the Holy Year.

At the diocesan level, many dioceses have encouraged the participation of Catholic schools and associations, often with the active assistance of priests and parish councils, in Holy Year activities.

Many dioceses have also been active in the organization of pilgrimages to the Cathedral and, eventually, pilgrimages to Rome.

National episcopal conferences have focused their attention on the preparation and distribution of catechetical programs and homilies, on involving communications media in the aims and purposes of the Holy Year, and on making contacts with the representatives of the various Christian churches and communities as well as the non-Christian religions with a view toward common participation in the ceremonies and programs of the Holy Year of Reconciliation.

BULL OF INDICTION OF THE HOLY YEAR 1975

Apostolorum Limina

May 23, 1974

**PAUL, SERVANT OF THE SERVANTS OF GOD,
TO ALL THE FAITHFUL: HEALTH AND THE
APOSTOLIC BLESSING.**

The memorials of the Apostles, the holy places of Rome where there are worthily preserved and religiously venerated the tombs of the Apostles Peter and Paul, those "holy fathers" through whom the city became not only the "disciple of truth" but also the teacher of truth¹ and the center of Catholic unity, now—as the universal jubilee to be celebrated there approaches—shine forth more brightly to the minds of the faithful as the goal of pilgrimage.

Down the centuries, these memorials have always impelled the Christian people to be fervent in their faith and to testify to ecclesial communion. This is so because the Church recognizes her identity and the cause of her unity in the foundation laid by Jesus Christ, namely, the Apostles.² From as early as the second century the faithful came to Rome to see and venerate the "trophies" of the Apostles Peter and Paul in those very places where they are preserved;³ and they made pilgrimages to the Church of Rome to contemplate her "regal dignity."⁴ In the fourth century the pilgrimage to Rome became the principal form in the West of that kind of religious journey. It was similar to, and had the same religious purpose as, the pilgrimage which was made in the East to Jerusalem where the Lord's sepulcher is found.⁵ In the early

Middle Ages there came on pilgrimage to Rome from various parts of Europe and even from the East, especially monks, those who were "linked to the Chair of Peter"⁶ and who wished to make a profession of their orthodox faith at the tombs of the Apostles.⁷

The idea of a pilgrimage increased further from the 12th to the 13th century, becoming all the more common by reason of a renewal of spirituality and popular piety which spread throughout Europe at that time. This renewal served to enrich the ancient notion which the Church received from tradition and which was equally to be found in other religions, namely, the concept of a "pilgrimage undertaken for the love of God."⁸ In this way the jubilee year originated: it was, as it were, the result of a process of maturing in the doctrinal, biblical and theological fields.⁹ It emerged plainly for the first time in the year 1220, when our predecessor Honorius III proclaimed a Jubilee Year for the pilgrimage to the tomb of Saint Thomas a Becket.¹⁰ Later, as is well known, pilgrims came to Rome to the basilicas of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, in the great popular and penitential movement of the year 1300, a movement confirmed by our predecessor Boniface VIII,¹¹ and which was marked by a longing to obtain pardon from God and peace among men. This movement was directed to this very lofty motive: "The glory of God and the exaltation of the faith."¹²

The Roman Jubilee of 1300 was the beginning and the pattern of those which have followed (every 25 years from the 15th century onwards, except when the series was interrupted by extraneous circumstances). This is an indication of the continuity and vitality which have always confirmed the relevance of this venerable institution for every age.

It is correct to say that the jubilees celebrated in recent times have preserved this outstanding value, whereby the unity and renewal of the Church are affirmed in a special way and all men encouraged to recognize one another as brothers and to walk in the path of peace. Such a desire manifested itself at the beginning of this century, when our predecessor Leo XIII proclaimed the Jubilee Year in 1900. The human family was filled with the same hopes and expectations when, a quarter of a century later, afflicted by grave dangers and contention, it awaited the Holy Year of 1925. These were proposed for the special Holy Year of 1933 on the

occasion of the 19th centenary of the Redemption. It was the same noble aspirations for justice and peaceful coexistence among men that Pius XII put forward in the last jubilee, in the year 1950.

I

It seems to us that in the present Holy Year all the principal and important motives of the previous jubilees are present and expressed in summary form in the themes that we ourself laid down in our discourse of May 9, 1973 when we first announced the Holy Year: Renewal and Reconciliation.¹³ We have offered these themes for the reflection of the pastors and faithful, particularly during the anticipated celebration of the jubilee in the local churches, and we have added to them our exhortations and our catechesis. But the aspirations that the two themes enunciate and the lofty ideals that they express will find a more complete realization in Rome, where the pilgrims to the tombs of the Apostles Peter and Paul and to the memorials of the other martyrs will come more easily into contact with the ancient sources of the Church's faith and life, in order to be converted by repentance, strengthened in charity and united more closely with their brethren by the grace of God.

This renewal and reconciliation pertain in the first place to the interior life, above all because it is in the depths of the heart that there exists the root of all good and, unfortunately, of all evil. It is in the depths of the heart therefore that there must take place conversion or metanoia, that is, a change of direction, of attitude, of option, of one's way of life.

But also for the Church as a whole, at a distance of 10 years from the end of the Second Vatican Council we view the Holy Year as the ending of a period of reflection and reform and the beginning of a new phase of building up in the theological, spiritual and pastoral spheres, which will develop upon the foundations laboriously laid down and consolidated during the past years, in accordance with the principles of new life in Christ and of the communion of all men in Him, who reconciled us to the Father by His blood.¹⁴

For the whole world this call to renewal and reconciliation is in harmony with the most sincere aspirations to liberty, justice, unity and peace that we see present wherever men become aware of their most grave problems and suffer from the mishaps produced by divisions and fratricidal wars. With the message of the Holy

Year, therefore, the Church wishes to indicate to all men of good will the vertical dimension of life that ensures the reference of all aspirations and experiences to an absolute and truly universal value, without which it is vain to hope that mankind will find once more a point of unification and a guarantee of true freedom. Even though it is characteristic of many sectors of modern society to assume secular forms, the Church, without interfering in matters which do not come within her competence, nevertheless wishes to impress on men the need of being converted to God, who alone is necessary,¹⁵ and of imbuing all their actions with fear and love of Him. For faith in God is the most powerful safeguard of the human conscience and the solid foundation of those relationships of justice and brotherhood for which the world yearns.

The pilgrimage to Rome by representatives of all the local churches, both pastors and people, will therefore be a sign of a new process of conversion and brotherly reconciliation.

As the minister of the word and of the grace of reconciliation, we respond to this sign of the interior dispositions of the pilgrims and of the renewed resolve of the Christian people whom they represent, by imparting the gift of the jubilee indulgence, insofar as we are able, to all the pilgrims who come to Rome and to all those who, though prevented from making the journey, accompany them in spirit.

II

It is well known from the Church's very ancient custom that the indulgence attached to many penitential practices was granted as a gift in a special way on the occasion of pilgrimages to the places sanctified by the life, passion and resurrection of our savior Jesus Christ and by the confession of the apostles. Today too we associate ourself with that venerable tradition, according to the principles and norms that we have ourself laid down in the apostolic constitution *Indulgentiarum Doctrina*¹⁶ and which we wish at this point briefly to recall.

Since Christ is our "justice" and, as has been fittingly said, our "indulgence," we, as the humble minister of Christ the redeemer, willingly extend a share in the gift of the indulgence—in accordance with the Church's tradition—to all the faithful who, through a profound conversion of the heart to God, through works of

penance, piety and brotherly solidarity, sincerely and fervently attest to their desire to remain united in charity with God and their brethren and to make progress in that charity.¹⁷ In fact, this sharing comes from the fullness of the treasury of salvation which is primarily found in Christ the redeemer himself, "in whom subsist in all their value the satisfactions and merits of his redemption."¹⁸ In this fullness in Christ, of which we have all received,¹⁹ there shines forth "the most ancient dogma of the communion of saints, whereby, in Christ and through Christ, the lives of the individual sons of God are linked with the lives of all the other Christian brethren by a marvelous bond in the supernatural unity of the Mystical Body of Christ, as in one mystical person."²⁰

For, "by the hidden and benevolent mystery of the divine will, men are linked together in a supernatural relationship, whereby just as the sin of one also harms the others, so also the holiness of one is beneficial to the others."²¹ By means of the indulgence, the Church, making use of her power as the minister of the redemption of Christ the Lord, communicates to the faithful a sharing in this fullness of Christ in the communion of saints,²² providing them with the ample means of salvation.

Thus the Church, aiding and embracing them like a mother, sustains her weak and infirm children, who find a firm support in the Mystical Body of Christ, which in its entirety works for their conversion through charity, example and prayer. Thus penitents find in this singular form of ecclesial charity a powerful aid to help them to put off the old man and put on the new, and conversion and renewal consist precisely in this.²³ In fact, the Church's aim in granting indulgences is not only that of helping the faithful to expiate the punishment they have deserved but also that of stimulating them to carry out works of piety, penance and charity, and in particular works that serve to favor the growth of faith and the common good.²⁴

III

For this reason, interpreting as it were the Church's maternal sentiments, we impart the gift of the plenary indulgence to all the faithful who are properly disposed, and who, after confessing their sins and receiving Holy Communion, pray for the intentions of the supreme pontiff and the college of bishops:

1) If they undertake a sacred pilgrimage to one of the patriarchal basilicas (the basilica of St. Peter's in the Vatican, St. Paul's Outside-the-Walls, the Lateran archbasilica of the Most Holy Savior, or St. Mary Major's), or to some other church or place of the city of Rome designated by the competent authority, and there devoutly take part in a liturgical celebration, especially the sacrifice of the Mass, or some exercise of piety (e.g., the Way of the Cross, the Rosary);

2) If they visit, in a group or individually, one of the four patriarchal basilicas and there spend some time in devout recollection concluding with the Our Father, the Profession of Faith in any approved form and a prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary;

3) If, being prevented by illness or some other grave reason from going on a pilgrimage to Rome, they unite themselves spiritually with this pilgrimage and offer their prayers and sufferings to God;

4) If, being prevented while in Rome by illness or some other grave reason from taking part in a liturgical celebration or exercise of piety or visit made by their group (ecclesial, family or social, as mentioned in 1) and 2) above), they unite themselves spiritually with the group and offer their prayers and sufferings to God.

During the Holy Year, moreover, there remain in force the other concessions of indulgences, with the proviso as before that a plenary indulgence can be gained only once a day²⁵; however, all indulgences can always be applied to the dead *in mundum suffragii*.²⁶

For the same reasons, namely, in order that the faithful be provided with every possible aid to salvation, and to help priests, especially confessors, we lay down that confessors taking part in the jubilee pilgrimage may use the faculties they have been given in their own dioceses by the legitimate authority,²⁷ so that both on the journey and in Rome they may hear the confessions of the faithful accompanying them on the pilgrimage, and also the confessions of others who, together with the members of their own group, may approach them. The right of the penitentiaries of the patriarchal basilicas regarding the confessionals reserved to them is maintained,²⁸ and special faculties will be granted by the Sacred Apostolic Penitentiary to the penitentiaries.

IV

We have stated above that the following two principal purposes have been laid down for the Holy Year: spiritual renewal in Christ and reconciliation with God, and we have said that these aims concern not only the interior life of each individual but the whole Church, and also in a certain sense the whole of human society. For this reason we earnestly exhort all concerned to consider these proposals, to undertake initiatives and to coordinate programs so that during the Holy Year real progress may be made in the renewal of the Church and also in the pursuit of certain goals which we have especially at heart, in accordance with the farsighted spirit of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council. Repentance, the purification of the heart and conversion to God must consequently bring about an increase in the apostolic activities of the Church.

During the Holy Year therefore generous efforts must be made to further evangelization, which is certainly the first of all the activities to be promoted. For the pilgrim Church "has been divinely sent to all nations that she might be 'the universal sacrament of salvation' " ²⁹ and she "is by her very nature missionary," ³⁰ and in her historical course is renewed to the extent that she shows herself ready to accept and to deepen through faith the Gospel of Jesus Christ the son of God, and to proclaim His saving message to men by word and the witness of her life.

The coming assembly of the Synod of Bishops does not have a merely extrinsic and fortuitous connection with the Holy Year. On the contrary, as we have already stated, "a zealous effort must be made to coordinate and link closely together both these ecclesial events." ³¹ In this regard the Synod will propose directives and suggestions for the reflection of the pastors, gathered about the supreme pontiff, so that they may carefully consider in the light of faith "the evangelization of the modern world," taking into account, in the light of the charity of Christ, the wishes of the whole Church and the more urgent needs of our time.

Therefore devout attention to the word of God together with catechetical instruction given to the faithful of every state and of all ages must lead Christians to a purifying of their way of living and to a higher knowledge of faith; it must dispel doubts, and stimulate the negligent to activate joyfully in their lives the Gospel message; it must impel everyone towards a conscious and fruitful

sharing in the sacraments; it must encourage communities and individuals to give witness to the faith by the uprightness and strength of their lives, so that the world may see the reason for the hope that is in us.³²

Now that ten years have passed since the Second Vatican Council began the great and salutary work of renewal in the fields of the pastoral ministry, the practice of penance and the sacred liturgy, we consider it altogether fitting that this work should be reviewed and carried further. If what the Church has clearly approved is kept in mind, it will be possible to recognize the valid and legitimate elements to be found in the many and varied experiments that have been carried out everywhere. Similarly, these same elements can, by a more earnest effort, be put into practice in accordance with the norms and principles suggested by pastoral prudence and a sense of true piety.

The presence of large numbers of pilgrims, both pastors and people, from Christian communities throughout the world, brought together in Rome by a fraternal desire to gain the true benefits of the grace and love of Christ, will undoubtedly afford excellent opportunities for putting forward, comparing and evaluating studies and viewpoints of various kinds. This will most certainly be the case if congresses and meetings are held at different levels in the ecclesial community and by varied groups of experts, and provided that prayer and a ready willingness to carry out the apostolate are joined together.

At this point we wish to draw particular attention to the need to find a just and proper balance between the different demands of the pastoral ministry today, a balance similar to that which has been admirably achieved in the sacred liturgy. We refer to the balance between tradition and renewal, between the necessarily religious nature of the Christian apostolate and its effectiveness as a force in all fields of social living, between free and spontaneous activity—which some are accustomed to call charismatic—in this apostolate and fidelity to laws based on the commands of Christ and of the pastors of the Church. For these laws, laid down by the Church and continually brought up to date, make allowance for individual experiments within the Christian community, in such a way that they are a help to the building up the body of Christ; which is the Church, and not a hindrance.³³

We wish likewise to draw attention to the ever increasing need to promote the kind of apostolate which, without damaging the Church's necessary and traditional institutions, namely dioceses and parishes, takes special account of particular local circumstances and categories of people. Such an apostolate must ensure that the leaven of the Gospel permeates those forms of modern social living which often differ from traditional forms of ecclesial life and seem foreign to the communities in which the faithful gather together and are linked in prayer, faith and charity. The forms we are thinking of are principally those of workers, members of the academic world and young people.

It will also be necessary to examine with care methods of teaching religion and of preaching the sacred word of God, to insure that they meet the needs of our time. This must be done with the aim of finding effective methods. Special care must be taken to insure that the media of social communications promote the human and Christian progress both of individuals and of communities.

These are questions of the greatest seriousness and importance. We must face up to them, and with humble prayer seek the grace of the Holy Year in order to solve them.

V

As is well known, in recent years one of the Church's most pressing concerns has been to disseminate everywhere a message of charity, of social awareness and of peace, and to promote, as far as she can, works of justice and of solidarity in favor of all those in need, of those on the margins of society, of exiles and of the oppressed—in favor of all men, in fact, whether individuals, social groups or peoples. We earnestly desire, therefore, that the Holy Year, through the works of charity which it suggests to the faithful and which it asks of them, should be an opportune time for strengthening and supporting the moral consciousness of all the faithful and of that wider community of all men which the message of the Church can reach if an earnest effort is made.

The ancient origins of the jubilee as seen in the laws and institutions of Israel clearly show that this social dimension is part of its very nature. In fact, as we read in the book of Leviticus,³⁴ the jubilee year, precisely because it was dedicated in a special

way to God, involved a new ordering of all things that were recognized as belonging to God: the land, which was allowed to lie fallow and was given back to its former owners, economic goods, insofar as debts were remitted, and, above all, man, whose dignity and freedom were reaffirmed in a special way by the manumission of slaves. The year of God, then, was also the year of man, the year of the earth, the year of the poor, and upon this view of the whole of human reality there shone a new light which emanated from the clear recognition of the supreme dominion of God over the whole of creation.

In today's world also the problems which most disturb and torment mankind—economic and social questions, the question of ecology and sources of energy, and above all that of the liberation of the oppressed and the uplifting of all men to a new dignity of life—can have light cast on them by the message of the Holy Year.

We wish, however, to invite all the sons and daughters of the Church, and especially the pilgrims coming to Rome, to undertake certain definite tasks which, as successor of Peter and head of that Church "which presides over the universal gathering of charity,"³⁵ we now publicly propose and commend to all. We refer to the carrying out of works of faith and charity for the benefit of our needy brethren in Rome and in other churches of the world. These works will not necessarily be grandiose ones, although such are in no way to be excluded. In many cases what are today called "micro-realizations" will be sufficient, corresponding as they do to the Gospel spirit of charity. In this field the Church, in view of the modest resources at her disposal, will perhaps have to limit herself more and more to giving men nothing more than the widow's mite.³⁶ But she knows and teaches that the good which counts most is that which, in humble and very often unknown ways, manages to give help where there is a little need and to heal small wounds—things which often find no place in large projects of social reform.

Nevertheless, the Church feels that it is necessary to give encouragement also to these larger programs for promoting justice and the progress of peoples. She renews her call to all those who have the power and the duty to build up in the world a more perfect order of social and human relations, that they should not give up because of the difficulties of the present times, and that they

should not be won over by selfish interests. Once more we make a particularly strong appeal on behalf of developing countries, and of peoples still afflicted by hunger and by war. Let special attention be given to the many needs which oppress man today, to the finding of employment by which men can provide for the needs of life, to housing which so many lack, to schools which need much assistance, to social and medical aid, and to the development and safeguarding of decent public moral standards.

We should like also to express the humble and sincere desire that in this present Holy Year too, in accordance with the tradition of previous jubilees, the proper authorities of the different nations should consider the possibility of wisely granting an amnesty to prisoners, as a witness to clemency and equity, especially to those who have given sufficient proof of moral and civic rehabilitation, or who may have been caught up in political and social upheavals too immense for them to be held fully responsible.

We express in anticipation our gratitude and invoke the Lord's abundant blessings on all those who will strive to ensure that this message of charity, of social awareness and of freedom, which the Church addresses to all men in the lively hope that she may be understood and listened to, is accepted and translated into reality in the political and social order. In expressing this hope we are conscious of following a wonderful tradition which began with the law of Israel and found its fullest expression in Our Lord Jesus Christ, who from the very beginning of His ministry presented Himself as the fulfillment of the ancient promises and figures connected with the jubilee year: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."³⁷

VI

If there is one spiritual advantage which we especially desire will come about from the celebration of the Holy Year, it is an increase in the number of those who devote their lives to serving the Church, especially priests and religious. For in order that the paths of grace and the means of salvation which the Holy Year indicates and offers to all the faithful may be properly explained

and made available, there will always be a need of those sacred ministers and witnesses of Christ's Gospel who by completely following the Lord show their fellowmen, namely the men of this and subsequent ages, the way of penance and of holiness.

Thus, the voice of God must be listened to diligently. He never ceases to stir up and invite chosen individuals to dedicate themselves generously to the service of the Church and of the whole human race by the exercise of the priestly ministry and by the faithful witness of the religious life. Some will be called by God to offer themselves to Him through obedience and sacred celibacy and as priests of Christ to teach and sanctify and lead the faithful wherever they may be. Others, men and women of various ages and conditions, will be attracted to the religious life, so that by fulfilling their baptismal promises through a higher way of life they may fully live in the spirit and truly benefit the Church and society. We desire strongly that the multitude of these especially dear members of the Church may increase and flourish more and more, so that through their priesthood and the activity of their religious life they may bear the joyful message of Christ to the ends of the earth and all give glory to the heavenly Father.

VII

Finally, we wish to proclaim and preach that the reconciliation of Christians is one of the principal aims of the Holy Year. However, before all men can be brought together and restored to the grace of God our Father, communion must be reestablished between those who by faith have acknowledged and accepted Jesus Christ as the Lord of mercy who sets men free and unites them in the spirit of love and truth. For this reason the Jubilee Year, which the Catholic Church has accepted as part of her own custom and tradition, can serve as a most opportune period for spiritual renewal and for the promotion of Christian unity.

We would moreover point out that the Second Vatican Council has taught that every effort and undertaking directed toward the reconciliation of Christians and all true ecumenism must necessarily start from an inner conversion of the heart, since the desire for Christian communion springs and grows from spiritual renewal, self-denial, the full exercise of charity and fidelity to revealed truth.³⁸

It is here that there is to be found the full and proper realization of the whole ecumenical movement, to which the Catholic Church adheres as far as she is able, and through which churches and communities not yet fully in communion with the Apostolic See seek and desire the perfect unity willed by Christ. It is in fact the task and duty of the whole Church to reestablish this unity in full ecclesial communion.³⁹ The year of grace, in this sense, provides an opportunity for doing special penance for the divisions which exist among Christians; it offers an occasion for renewal in the sense of a heightened experience of holiness of life in Christ; it allows progress toward that hoped-for reconciliation by intensified dialogue and concrete Christian collaboration for the salvation of the world: "that they also may be one in us, so that the world may believe."⁴⁰

We have expressed once more our intentions and our desires concerning the celebration of the Holy Year in this city of Rome. We now invite our brothers in the episcopate and all the pastors and faithful of the churches throughout the world, of those churches also which are not in full communion with the Roman Church, and indeed all who believe in God, to participate at least spiritually in this feast of grace and redemption, in which Christ offers Himself as the teacher of life. Together with the pastors and faithful on pilgrimage to the tombs of the Apostles and the early martyrs, we desire to profess faith in God the almighty and merciful Father and in Jesus Christ our redeemer.

For our part we would hope that all who come to Rome to see Peter⁴¹ may through us experience in the Holy Year the truth of the words of St. Leo the Great: "for in the whole Church Peter repeats each day, 'you are Christ the Son of the Living God,' and every tongue which confesses the Lord is inspired by the teaching of this voice."⁴²

We would wish also that through our ministry and that of our brother priests a huge multitude of faithful may come to the sources of salvation.⁴³ May the holy door which we shall open on the night of Christmas Eve be a sure sign of this new approach to Christ, who alone is the way⁴⁴ and the door.⁴⁵ It will be a sure sign too of the paternal affection with which, filled with love and desiring peace, we open our heart to all.

We implore the Blessed Virgin Mary, the holy mother of the Redeemer and of the Church, mother of grace and of mercy, collaborator of reconciliation and shining example of the new life, to ask her Son to grant to all our brethren and sons and daughters the grace of this Holy Year, to renew and preserve them. To her hands and to her maternal heart we commend the beginning, the development and the conclusion of this most important matter.

We wish this our letter to take full and immediate effect, in such a manner that whatsoever has been laid down and decreed in it be religiously observed by all concerned, and come into force, all things to the contrary notwithstanding. If anyone knowingly or unknowingly shall act other than in accordance with what we have laid down, we order that such action be considered altogether null and void.

Given in Rome, at St. Peter's, on the 23th day of May, the solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord, in the year 1974, the 11th of our pontificate.

I Paul,

Bishop of the Catholic Church

* * *

¹ Cf. St. Leo the Great, *Sermo LXXXII*, 1: PL 54, 422.

² Cf. Rev. 21:14.

³ Cf. The testimony of Gaius, an ecclesiastic of the time of Pope Zephyrinus, in Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, II, 25, 7.

⁴ Cf. The inscription of Abercius, bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia at the end of the second century; text and translation in M. Guarducci, *L'iscrizione di Abercio*, "Ancient Society" 2 (1971), pp. 176-177.

⁵ Cf. St. Maximus of Turin, *Homilia* 72: PL 57, 405 b.

⁶ The expression is found in a letter of St. Columban to Pope Boniface IV in 613: *Sancti Columbani Opera*, ed. G. S. M. Walker, Dublin 1957, p. 48.

⁷ Concerning this custom Cf. F. M. Mignanti, *Istoria della Sacrosanta Basilica Vaticana . . .*, Rome-Turin 1867, p. 180.

⁸ Cf. in general B. Kotting, *Peregrinatio Religiosa*, Wallfahrten in Der Antike und das Pilgerwesen in der Alten Kirche, Regensburg 1950.

⁹ R. Foreville, *L'Idée de Jubilé chez les Theologiens et les Canonistes (XII-XIII S.) avant l'Institution du Jubilé Romain (1300)*: "Revue d'Histoire Ecclesiastique" LVI (1961), pp. 401-423.

¹⁰ P. Pressuti, *Regesta Honorii III*, Roma 1888-95, 1840; text in R. Foreville, *Le Jubile de Saint Thomas Becket du XIII au XV siecle (1220-1470)*. Etudes et Documents, Paris 1958, pp. 163-164.

¹¹ Bull *Antiquorum Habet Fida Relation*, dated 22 February 1300: Extravagantes Comm. V, IX, 1.

¹² Cf. The glossa of Cardinal Giovanni Monaco on the same bull.

¹³ Cf. Paul VI, *Allocutio qua Christifidelibus in Basilica Vaticana coram admissis nuntiatur*. Se Universalem Iubilaeum in Annum MCMLXXV Indictum, d. 9 M. Maii A. 1973: AAS 65 (1973), pp. 322-325.

¹⁴ Cf. 2 Cor. 5:18-20; Rom. 5:10.

¹⁵ Cf. Lk. 10:42; Mt. 6:33.

¹⁶ Apostolic Constitution *Indulgentiarum Doctrina*, AAS 59 (1967), pp. 5-24.

¹⁷ Cf. Paul VI, *Epist. ad e. mum p.d. Maximilianum S.R.E. Cardinalem de Furstenberg ob indictum universale maximumque jubilaum in annum MCMLXXV, iniziandosi ufficialmente*, d. 31 M. Maii A. 1973: AAS 65 (1973), pp. 357-360.

¹⁸ Apost. Const. *Indulgentiarum Doctrina*, 5: AAS 59 (1967), p. 11.

¹⁹ Cf. Jn 1:16.

²⁰ Apost. Const. *Indulgentiarum Doctrina*, 5: AAS 59 (1967), pp. 10-11; Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, III, qu. 48, A. 2 ad 1 and q. 49, a. 1.

²¹ Apost. Const. *Indulgentiarum Doctrina*, 4: AAS 59 (1967), p. 9.

²² Cf. Apost. Const. *Indulgentiarum Doctrina*, 8: AAS 59 (1967), p. 16.

²³ Cf. Paul VI, *Epist. ad Rev. P. Constantinum Koser, Ordinis Fratrum Minorum Vicarium Generalem, septingentesimo quinquagesimo anno volvente as "Indulgencia Portiunculae" per honorium pp. III Sancto Francisco Concessa, Sacrosancta Portiunculae Ecclesia*, d. 14 m. iulii a. 1966: AAS 58 (1966), pp. 631-634.

²⁴ Cf. Apost. Const. *Indulgentiarum Doctrina*, 8: AAS 59 (1967), p. 17.

²⁵ Cf. *Enchiridion Indulgentiarum*, norma 24, para. 1.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, norma 4.

²⁷ Cf. Paul VI, *Motu Proprio Pastorale Munus*, 1, 14: AAS 56 (1964), p. 8.

²⁸ Cf. First Synod of Rome, 1960, art. 63.

²⁹ Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church, *Ad Gentes Divinitus*, 1, AAS 58 (1966), p. 947.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 2: AAS 58 (1966), p. 948.

³¹ Discourse to the general secretariat of the Synod of Bishops: *L'Osservatore Romano* of 6 April 1974, p. 4.

³² Cf. 1 Peter 3:15.

³³ Cf. Rom. 15:2; 1 Cor. 14:3; Eph. 4:12.

³⁴ Lev. 25:8ff.

³⁵ Cf. St. Ignatius of Antioch, *Epist. ad Romanos*, inscr.: Funk 1, 252.

³⁶ Cf. Lk. 21:2; Mk. 12:42.

³⁷ Lk. 4:18:19.

³⁸ Cf. Decree on Ecumenism, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, 7: AAS 57 (1965), p. 97.

³⁹ Cf. *Ibid.*, 5: AAS 57 (1965), p. 96.

⁴⁰ Jn. 17:21.

⁴¹ Cf. Gal. 1:18.

⁴² Sermo III: PL 54, 146.

⁴³ Cf. Is. 12:3.

⁴⁴ Cf. Jn. 14:6.

⁴⁵ Cf. Jn. 10:7, 9.

Pope Paul's letter on the opening of the Holy Year

To His Eminence
Cardinal Maximilian de Fürstenberg
President of the Central Committee
for the Holy Year

Lord Cardinal,

As the official beginning of that vast movement of spiritual renewal, which will have its climax in Rome, in 1975, is on Sunday June 10, the solemnity of Pentecost, we wish to set forth briefly to you, Lord Cardinal, that we have placed before the Central Committee for the Holy Year what are the aims we have in mind with this initiative, what spirit we would like to see prevail in those who respond to our invitation, and what fruits we hope can be gathered with the grace of the Holy Spirit, in whose name and in whose light we are now setting out.

As we declared from our very first announcement, on May 9 last, with the Jubilee we propose the renewal of man and his reconciliation with God, which take place above all in depth, in the interior sanctuary, where conscience is called to bring about its conversion, or "metanoia," by means of faith and repentance (cf. Mk. 1, 15), and to aim at the fullness of charity.

God himself, infinitely merciful, after redeeming the world by means of Jesus Christ his Son, calls all men, none excluded, to participate in the fruits of redemption (cf. 1 Tim. 2, 4) and intervenes with his Holy Spirit to operate salvation in them (cf. Rom. 8, 10 ff.).

To strengthen the bonds

The Church is convinced that only from this interior operation can be derived also reconciliation between men, as the social dimension embraces all sectors and levels of life, in relations between individuals, families, groups, categories, nations; to become,

as far as is possible for man's frailty and the imperfection of earthly institutions, a ferment of peace and universal unity.

She undertakes, therefore, to bring it about that the force of the redemption wrought by Christ should strengthen in the faithful, in dioceses, in parishes, in religious communities and in other centers of Christian life and apostolate, as well as in the Churches separated from us up to now, the bonds of faith and charity in the Blood of Christ (cf. Col. 1, 20). The Pentecost of grace will thus be able to become also the Pentecost of the new brotherhood. This is the spirit we hope to see flourish in the whole celebration of the Holy Year.

Therefore we trust that the value of penitential practices will be rediscovered, as a sign and way of grace, as a commitment for the deep renewal which receives its full efficacy in the Sacrament of Penance, to be used and administered according to the provisions of the Church, for resumption by the individual and the community of progress along the way of salvation (cf. Acts 16, 17).

It seems to us that the expression, the occasion and, as it were, the synthesis of these practices, which will have their completion in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, can be the Pilgrimage, which in the authentic tradition of Christian ascetism, has always been carried out for reasons of piety and expiation. Today, too, it can be inspired by these motives, both when it takes place in forms more similar to those of the ancient pilgrims to Rome, and when it uses the modern means of communication.

Need for charity

It is necessary, however, that the Pilgrimage should be accompanied not only by prayer and penance but also by the exercise of brotherly charity, which is a clear demonstration of love of God (cf. 1 Jn. 4, 20, 21; 3, 14), and must be expressed, by the individual faithful, their associations, and ecclesial communities and institutions, in spiritual and corporal works of mercy, in favor of needier brothers. Thus the Holy Year will really widen the scope of the Church's charity, and will portend a renewal and reconciliation of universal dimensions.

For these aims to be achieved more easily, let us express the wish that the practice of the Pilgrimage will be carried out in all the local Churches, in cathedrals and sanctuaries, diocesan and

national, as intermediate stages converging at last, in 1975, in Rome, the visible center of the universal Church. Here the representatives of the local Churches will conclude the way of renewal and reconciliation, venerate the tombs of the Apostles, renew their adherence to the Church of Peter, and we, God willing, will have the joy of receiving them with open arms and together with them we will bear witness to the unity of the Church in faith and charity.

It is our ardent desire that in this march towards the "source of salvation" (cf. Is. 12, 3) our sons fully united to the Church of Peter will be joined, in the forms possible for them, also by the other followers of Christ and all those who, along different and apparently distant ways, are seeking the one God with upright conscience and goodwill (cf. Acts 17, 27).

The concrete programs of the Pilgrimage and other practices, aimed at fostering renewal and reconciliation, will certainly be indicated by the Episcopal Conferences for the local Churches, taking into account both the outlook and customs of the places, and the real purposes of the Holy Year, which we have just outlined.

On our side we ask pilgrims, after having prayed according to our intentions and to those of the whole Episcopal College, to take part, locally, in a solemn community function, or to make a stop to reflect before the Lord, ending it with the recitation or singing of the Pater and the Creed, and with an invocation to the Blessed Virgin.

Gift of Indulgence

As if in response to these simple and sincere manifestations by means of which the faithful, in the local Churches, will carry out a real conversion and profess that they wish to remain and become stronger in charity towards God and towards brothers, we, as the humble minister of Christ the Redeemer, will grant, in the due forms, the gift of the Indulgence. Also those sons of ours who, not being able to take part in the Pilgrimage because they are prevented by illness or some other serious cause, join in it spiritually with the offering of their prayers and their suffering, will benefit from this gift.

With the Holy Year, the Church, exercising the "ministry of reconciliation" (cf. 2 Cor. 5, 18), offers privileged opportunities,

special appeals so that all those reached by her word and, even more, as is our wish and our most ardent prayer, by the inner and ineffable touch of grace, may participate in Christian joy, the fruit of the salvific virtues of the Redeemer.

To refine spirits

We conclude this letter with the expression of the hopes we place in the celebration of the coming Holy Year. They are, we repeat, renewal and reconciliation as interior facts and as implementations of unity, brotherhood and peace, expanding from spirits renewed and reconciled in Christ, throughout the whole Church, and towards the whole human society, on the ways of charity, the fruit of which is justice, goodness, mutual forgiveness, the gift of oneself and of one's property for one's brothers. In a word we hope and trust that a renewed Christian sense of life will refine spirits and spread abundantly in the world, for common salvation.

This, Lord Cardinal, is what we wished to let you know on this eve of an important period of the history of the Church in our days, which will be symbolized when the time comes, by the opening of the Holy Door. We beg you to communicate it to our Brothers in the Episcopate, while we bless you and all those whom our appeal reaches with the most ample outpouring of our heart, the heart of a father and of the humble servant of the servants of God.

From the Vatican Apostolic Palace, May 31, 1973, Feast of the Ascension of Our Lord, the tenth year of our Pontificate.

Paulus PP. VI

The Pastoral aims of the Holy Year

In January, 1973, the secretariat of the Central Committee for the Holy Year sent the Episcopal Conferences and National Committees for the Holy Year the following Pastoral Document to draw their attention to some points duly fixed by the Central Committee itself, and partly made known already, but now confirmed by the news and testimonies coming from the local Churches about the first results of the Jubilee events and the preparation of the Pilgrimage to Rome.

Principal aims

The principal aims to keep in mind during the whole course of the Holy Year in the local Churches in preparation for its culmination in Rome, are the following:

1. awareness and personal reflection on the human and Christian vocation and on the commitments of worship and faith in God;
2. awakening to the problem of conversion, salvation, liberation from evil, proposed in terms adapted to the mentality, conditions and needs of the world today (also taking into account, where necessary, the psychological and sociological aspects of the problem);
3. a revaluation of repentance as the essential element of the Christian spirit and a fresh awareness of the Sacrament of Penance as a means of nourishing this spirit, in the practical forms of administration responding to the genuine tradition of the Church and to the psychological and social conditions of men today, fixed by the Holy See in a document soon to be published;
4. suitable stress on the significance of repentance as reconciliation with God and at the same time with brothers, the Christian community and the whole of mankind (taken as a community guided by a moral order corresponding to the divine plans), both in the Sacrament of Penance and in Christian practice, and therefore on its efficacy in bringing about unity and peace;
5. continual reference to Christ as the one Saviour, from whom comes all grace, also that of faith, conversion, good works, perse-

verance, continual renewal, and in whose name the Church carries out her whole ministry and offers her services to all men;

6. strengthening of communion in Christ at the level of personal conscience; of ecclesial and inter-denominational relations, of groups and institutions of the Church as a *fact* already existing thanks to Christ and to which it is necessary always to refer and return to *put right* the ruptures that occur in this communion owing to personal and social failures in the past.

7. a reminder of the mission and of the duty of Christians to be operators of unity and peace in the world—in all fields of action: family, professional, social, political, cultural, etc.—adopting the evangelical method of brotherhood and forgiveness and expressing the Christian spirit of charity in facts, values and institutions.

Practical initiatives

The *initiatives* suggested by the Central Committee which are being carried out in many local Churches to attain the aims of the Holy Year better, are the following:

1. *At the parish level:*

a) holy missions—in old and new forms—to awaken in the faithful the spirit of repentance, reconciliation and unity, according to the requirements and aims mentioned above;

b) catechetical courses, sermons, study groups, discussions, etc., about these points and their practical applications;

c) revision of the whole situation of parishes from the aspects of religious practice, faith, works of charity, pious unions and apostolic associations, etc., in order to give them new impetus, with methods adapted to the psychological, sociological and religious conditions. (For this purpose it will be useful to establish agreements and programs in deaneries or groups of parishes, with the participation of the religious men and women in charge of the various associations and works);

d) arousing the interest of pupils of the catechetical schools and of young people of every category in the aims and working groups, researches, discussions, competitions, etc.

2. *At the diocesan level:*

a) promoting and coordinating the initiatives of parishes and other pastoral centers, in the attempt to keep them along lines that will make it possible to reach the aims proposed better;

b) stimulating the participation of Catholic schools and institutes, various associations, religious orders, etc. in the initiatives;

c) preparing and carrying out the diocesan pilgrimage to the cathedral church and to other holy places, particularly shrines, determined by the bishops, with the following purposes:

—community celebration of a rite of spiritual and social reconciliation for the whole local Church;

—manifestation of ecclesial unity and commitment to express it in actual works before the local population, even before non-believers;

—spiritual preparation of the pilgrimage of the local Church to Rome, representing the whole diocese in the meeting with the Roman Church and with the Pope. (For this purpose it will be useful for the bishops to interest in this work the pastoral offices, the Priests' and Pastoral Council, the religious, the leaders of the various associations and institutions of the diocese).

3. *At the national (or regional) level:*

a) agreeing on common forms and ways for the diocesan celebration of the Holy Year in the various dioceses of the nation (or region);

b) drawing up and distributing the plans of catechetics and homilies, liturgical and paraliturgical texts, calendars, etc. for the Holy Year in the various dioceses and in the pilgrimage to Rome, according to the model-schema prepared by the special Central Liturgical Commission and already sent to the Episcopal Conferences (in the "Ordo Jubilaei" and in n. 4 of the Holy Year Bulletin);

c) interesting the various organs of public opinion and of social communication in the subjects and aims of the Holy Year;

d) making any necessary agreements with the public authorities as regards freedom in the celebrations;

e) getting into touch and reaching agreements with the representatives of the various Christian churches and communions and perhaps other religions, for joint participation in the rites and other initiatives of the Holy Year of Reconciliation;

f) informing the Central Committee about everything. (The Episcopal Conferences should act in agreement with the Unions of Religious Superiors and with the leaders of the various associations and institutions).

Pastoral problems

Let us mention again some pastoral problems with regard to which it is suggested that initiatives should be taken on the plane of study, revision and programming, for example at meetings or congresses at the national and international level, according to the spirit and the basic points fixed for the Holy Year:

- 1) faith and religion in labor conditions;
- 2) faith and religion in the world of the young;
- 3) faith and religion in the world of culture and science;
- 4) faith and religion in the development of the business and consumer society;
- 5) faith and religion in the world of social communication and entertainment;
- 6) faith and religion in the use of one's leisure;
- 7) the problem of priestly and religious vocations in a new community awareness of the Church;
- 8) the missionary reawakening of the whole Church.

The Agencies, Associations, Movements, etc., engaged in study and the Apostolate in the fields mentioned, are urged to take initiatives at the various levels in order to promote a general revival of conscience, in the first place, but also of commitment of the Catholic groups and the Christian people as a whole, for an effective work of renewal according to the spirit and directives of the Council.

The "Week of Reconciliation"

The climax of the Holy Year celebrations in the local Churches will be, however, the "Week of Reconciliation." The liturgical rite and the catechetical illustration of this "Week" are to be found in the "Ordo Jubilaei celebrandi" published by the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship on behalf of the Central Committee, and already sent to the Episcopal Conferences.

Stress should be laid on the importance of Lent and Easter for this "Week" which will deal with the following subjects: I. The hope of the world and the kingdom of God. II. The Word become flesh. III. "Repent and believe." IV. "Through death to life." V. Celebration of Reconciliation. VI. The Church gathered in the Holy Spirit. VII. The mystery of unity.

The texts for this "Week" can be used, however, in celebrations on other occasions (days, weeks, various liturgical times) throughout the span of the Holy Year.

The "Ordo" also contains the texts for "Easter in the Holy Year."

It is obvious, however, that the basis of all the celebrations indicated by the "Ordo" or outlined and fixed by the Episcopal Conferences in the various countries, is constituted by the principal aims of the Holy Year, which are expressed in the pastoral commitment of repentance, to be spread as the spirit and fundamental practice of Christian life in close connection with the faith.

Making this program come to life calls for a preparation, about which we take the liberty of offering some suggestions.

Spiritual preparation

The Central Committee offers the groups interested in the preparation and course of the Holy Year some suggestions, also taken from the reports of various Episcopal Conferences, in confirmation of what the Committee itself had already drawn up and made known.

1. The "Holy Year Prayer" has been duly issued. It would be a good thing to recite it in the community and in all the churches, also among the "Prayers of the faithful," and spread it in families, institutes, religious communities and among the sick. It may serve

a great deal to drive home the aims and the spirit of the Holy Year to the faithful of the whole world.

2. Presenting it to the faithful, it would be useful to set it in a framework of catechetics on the value of ecclesial prayer, on the Mystical Body and on the Communion of Saints.

3. The sick and other suffering and needy persons should be asked to offer up—always united to the mystery of the communion of the Saints—their afflictions and sorrows in union with Christ for the renewal and reconciliation of people in the Holy Year. A continuous work of enlightenment, consolation and exhortation with regard to the Holy Year should be carried out particularly among these united faithful.

4. Family and group meetings should be imbued with prayer and the ideals of the Holy Year in order to leaven all environments with the spirit of renewal and reconciliation which are to be the outstanding characteristics of the Jubilee celebration.

5. The affirmation of this spirit will be the best way to avoid even the most remote appearance of mere show and triumphalism in the Jubilee celebrations. What is most important is to promote works, acts, interventions which reflect the one “glory” that is really beyond all question: the glory of the Risen Christ.

6. The stress on spiritual and charismatic subjects will also serve to make the intentions of the Church and the Holy See better known and appreciated. These intentions are all geared to reconciliation and not to partisan worldly interests.

7. For the movement to have really popular repercussions, it is necessary to find persons who bear witness to Christ in an outstandingly sincere way and get them to speak on all the channels available to interest public opinion in Rome and in the various countries. The problem is to choose persons—priests and laymen—of a real Christian spirit, if not actually saints.

Pastoral preparation

We wish to recall the great subjects of the Holy Year that have been proposed for study and discussion in Catholic schools and reviews, regarding living problems on the spiritual, ecclesial and social plane, from the biblical, dogmatic, moral, ascetic, liturgico-pastoral standpoint, etc., in terms of spiritual life. They can also

supply the material for a catechetics of the Holy Year adapted to the various conditions of places and persons.

1. Faith and repentance as the essence of the Christian message; Conversion to God and brotherly communion; Sin and its weight in human life and history; Reconciliation with God by means of Christ's blood and cross; Redemption and liberation; The mission of the Church as the minister of redemption and promoter of human liberation; The Church "sancta" and "poenitens"; Metanoia not so much in the structures as in man; Interior and complete conversion of the human person.

2. The ministry of forgiveness and the gift of remission; Personal value and ecclesial solidarity in conversion and repentance; Essence, ways and present-day problems of the sacrament of Penance; The relationship between Penance and indulgences as the expression and application of solidarity in Christ and in the Church; The right way to present indulgences today.

3. Human renewal as the fruit of reconciliation; Christian repentance and human values; Christian faith and the religious sense of life in the context of secular society; Christian hope and the commitment for development and social pacification; The viewpoint of eternal life and the temporal dimensions of Christian action for peace; The commitment of Christians at the various levels and in the various sectors of social action.

4. The great moments of reconciliation in the human heart, in human relations, in the Church and among the Churches, among all believers, among peoples and States.

5. The unity of the Church in prayer, charity, repentance; Brotherly charity in the world today; The actual methods to build peace in ecclesial and social relations.

6. The theological and pastoral meaning of the Roman Jubilee; The Pilgrimage as a penitential practice; The "wish to see the successor of St. Peter" and the jubilee; and to see the provisional and ministerial function of Rome in the perspective of our pilgrimage to eternity.

Practical plans for action

1. The fundamental theological and catechetical subjects connected with the Holy Year, should be dealt with and developed in

the framework of today's ecclesiology and in relation to the spiritual demands revealed by the mentality of the men of today, with an approach faithful to the true Christian doctrine and open to all the rightful aspirations of the contemporary spirit.

2. It would be necessary to interest scholars in the various branches of theology so that they will elaborate the afore-said subjects at the scientific level, and pastoral experts so that they will adapt them to the necessities of the ministry.

3. In the development of the subjects of the Holy Year it should be kept in mind that the primacy of the material and of social structure asserted in many movements of modern culture cannot be effectively contested by merely reaffirming the primacy of the transcendent and of the life of the Spirit. It must be shown that in the perspective of the Holy Year the importance of the material and of structure is not only not ignored but is even given greater value, just on account of what really has the primacy, that is, the values of faith and prayer.

4. The theologico-pastoral subjects proposed must be dealt with in such a way as to attract the present interest in a particular type of spiritual message, which corresponds to the essence of Christian spirituality. The elements of the latter, which arouse very favorable echoes even in the laity, are bound up with the sanctifying potential of the Christian's historical commitment. This potential presupposes: a) the goodness of the natural order; b) the welding of nature and grace; c) the supernatural value of time; d) the catholic dimensions of the Incarnation; e) the perspective of history in the light of eternity.

These possibilities must then be connected with self-denial and the Cross.

5. The explanation of the value of the pilgrimage to Rome as a "sign," is of particular importance. The same can be said of Rome itself, as a bridge and center of service with regard to a spiritual reality of individuals and of humanity, which is far more lofty and eternal.

6. The pilgrimage should be presented above all as the quest for a new meeting with God in the experience of contact with the Tombs or "Confessions" of the Apostles Peter and Paul (who sum

up also the memories of the other Apostles), whose bodies rest in their basilicas, but whose faith lives in Rome and in the universal Church even in our own day.

7. In the local churches the Pilgrimage must be to the Cathedrals, where the heart of the diocese and the presence of the bishop will be rediscovered; to the Sanctuaries of the Blessed Virgin (local or regional); to the Churches where the Saints who founded them are buried. It is necessary to draw up in good time for these pilgrimages plans of liturgical celebrations and popular devotion with reference to the Holy Year.

8. Among the practices, in addition to the liturgical celebrations, mention should be made of the Rosary and the *Via Crucis*, with ideas suited for the Holy Year, according to the various liturgical times.

Practical suggestions for catechetics

For good catechetics for the Holy Year, it would be useful:

1) to promote courses of lectures on the subjects of the Holy Year in the various dioceses and parishes, and in particular to stress the importance of the Sacraments, centered upon Penance, the Eucharist and the sanctification of feast-days;

2) to take the opportunity to dispel errors and confusions that are widespread among the people today, with regard to the Church, priests, religious life, indulgences, etc.;

3) to supply priests with short, concise themes on the subjects of the Holy Year, with biblical, liturgical and conciliar texts, and rapid explanations, as has been done by various Episcopal Conferences and in various dioceses;

4) to find really "inspiring" preachers and lecturers and launch them (distributing them over large areas) for the Holy Year; and in any case to look for and send suitably trained preachers and lecturers, in agreement on the same schema of subjects;

5) the subject of Reconciliation should be developed in all instructions and celebrations. Also the readings for liturgical or paraliturgical celebrations should be chosen on this subject: for example the ones indicated in the "Ordo lectionum" under the

heading "Concord." But the best rule is that of the "Ordo Jubilaei celebrandi."

The Holy Year and non-Catholics

1. The Episcopal Conferences and the National Committees are exhorted to study opportunities and ways to invite to the Holy Year celebrations Christians not united with Peter's Chair and non-Christians, and to interest also non-believers.

2. The general line to follow is to obtain the communion of souls around the fundamental values: conversion, prayer, charity; with the intention of opening up ways, giving opportunities, in order that divine grace may bring about the blooming of a closer unity in faith and in adherence to the Church.

3. It will be very important to study and show how the subjects of the Holy Year coincide with certain fundamental motives of the mentality, culture and religion of the various peoples: for example the followers of Confucius, Buddha, Mohammed.

4. Commissions or mixed study groups should be set up to study the possibility and ways of a joint participation in the Holy Year in Rome and to present suggestions and requests, if any, to the Central Committee.

The Holy Year and charity

1. In the celebrations of the Holy Year a large place should always be given to individual and collective works of charity, understood in all its forms, reaching out as far as possible.

2. Particular care should be given to the poor, those living in shanty towns, the homeless, the aged, those suffering from loneliness.

3. Among the practices required for the Indulgence, stress should be laid on the necessity of carrying out works of charity, though the latter are freely chosen.

4. Among the works of charity recommended are payment of the fares of poor pilgrims and the provision of board and lodging for them, free of charge. For this purpose it will be a good thing to make warm appeals to private persons, families, parishes, agencies and religious institutes.

5. Interdiocesan forms of aid should be promoted: in the sense of help from the richer to the poorer dioceses, and particularly to dioceses in mission lands. This aid should pass through the Central Committee, which has set up a special Commission for solidarity among pilgrims. Some churches have already committed themselves to this work of exquisite Christian and ecclesial brotherhood.

6. It is part of the tasks of this Commission to collect funds both to cover travelling expenses and assistance for poor pilgrims and for works of individual aid (for example medical treatment, victims of accidents or crimes); all churches, agencies, and institutes of the various countries should contribute to this fund.

7. Many charitable initiatives, celebrations of "days," collection of offerings, etc., which are now traditional, should take on a special character in the Holy Year with regard to the spirit and aim of the Jubilee.

The Holy Year and the Young

Particular attention must be paid to the young so that they may receive and appreciate the message of the Holy Year.

A special Commission, presided over by Mons. Patrick Carrol Abbing, the founder and president of Boys' Town, is at work to study and give concrete form to the initiatives to be taken for the Holy Year of the Young in Rome. But here we offer some features of a "Holy Year Teaching" which may be of help also for specific initiatives in the local Churches:

1. the first principle will be to use a language adapted to the young, and to propose to them a message responding to their aspirations. This message must:

a) be humanizing and promote solidarity of works, in favor of the whole of mankind;

b) be respectful of the essential values inherent in man and be charitable to all;

c) invite the Christian to be, in this context, the best witness of Jesus Christ, the perfect man.

2. The message must take its place in a theology of the Church explained in a language that aims at discovering, through the Holy Year, the dimension of the Church. Basic points:

a) not so much a Church *above* or *opposite*, but immersed in the world, like yeast in the human dough; not of the world, but *in* the world;

b) mankind has already been saved by Christ, present and visible in the Church;

c) men of goodwill are in union with Christ's Church;

d) a Christian is one who has chosen Christ, undertaking to renew himself and to renew all other men in him;

e) he who is most capable of operating, suffering and dying to serve others, is most in conformity with Christ;

f) the communion of the faithful is called forth, guided and symbolized by the Bishops and the Pope, in accordance with Christ's will.

3. *It will be necessary to respect the many different forms, to insert the yeast of the Holy Year in the youth movement.* The following facts should be kept in mind:

a) every nation or ecclesial region expresses a youth with different problems, culture, sensibility and customs:

b) the demand of the young starts in the first place from the deep recesses of conscience and Christ's proposal reaches the individual first of all, then the group, then the local Church, and finally the whole Church;

c) it is useful to give new meaning and value, in the light of the "Holy Year," to many youth initiatives that have already won recognition at the international and local level (for example meetings, marches, the plight of refugees, etc.) and respect and use their appeal, due to their spontaneous origin.

4. *A choice and a proposal of valid contents will perhaps be opportune, passing over the traditional forms, if necessary, and using a new language.* Thus for example:

The Holy Year

—a year of solidarity, fellowship, hopes, justice, liberation, love, trust, reconciliation, making all things new.

Pilgrimage

—a moment of truth or quest for it, passed together;

—a sense of common poverty to understand one another and plan a new path for humanity;

—meetings to share experiences with one another, to talk to one another, to express the joy of being together; together with one another, with the Bishop, or with the Pope, signs of unity.

Repentance

—checking and revision of the path of mankind, and of the contribution of the young to its progress;

—awareness of the human weakness, the inconstancy and inconsistency of youthful sincerity at times;

—the sense of general guilt, of mutual manipulation, of slavery to fashions and lack of authenticity in the group;

—reconversion towards the persons of the poor, the aged, educators, authority, recognizing their social role and always loving their persons;

—conversion from the idea of a God who frightens and is of utility only, to the three living persons of the Father who loves us, Christ who saves us, and the Holy Spirit who is living love in us.

Indulgences

—spiritual solidarity among people, united by the one Savior;

—confidence in others, opening to the Church which makes us capable of turning to men and to God;

—accepting the love of others which saves us by means of the communication of the merits by which Christians cooperate in redemption;

—recognizing that this exchange of spiritual gifts was entrusted by Christ to Peter, who makes real their communication.

A Message to the Catholic People of the United States

JOHN CARDINAL KROL

Pentecost Sunday, June 10, 1973

Dear Friends:

Last month our Holy Father, Pope Paul, announced that the Church throughout the world will observe 1975 as a Holy Year. He asked that the presidents of bishops' conferences everywhere explain the meaning of the Holy Year to the Catholic people of their countries and encourage their wholehearted participation. Pope Paul's announcement raises the questions: What is a Holy Year? What meaning does it have for us? What are we to do about it?

The tradition of the Holy Year has its origin in Old Testament times, when the Jewish people observed a Jubilee Year every seven years. This was a period in which debts were forgiven, slaves were freed, and neighbor was reconciled with neighbor. The tradition was revived by the Church in the Middle Ages. The first Holy Year was observed in 1300. Pilgrims flocked to Rome to do penance, visit the shrines there, and receive the spiritual benefits of participation in the observance. In modern times Holy Years have been observed every quarter-century. The last was held in 1950. The 1975 observance will be the 26th general Holy Year.

Although the Holy Year has its roots in ancient tradition, it is profoundly relevant for us today. For the heart of the Holy Year is its spiritual significance. As Pope Paul has explained, it aims at nothing less than "the interior renewal of man." And, in keeping with the tradition that began in Old Testament times, the special theme of the 1975 Holy Year is "Reconciliation." Through prayer, through penance, through good works we are encouraged to remove the barriers that separate us from God and from one another—to rekindle the first of our love for God and our fellows. As St. Paul tells us, "Now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near through the blood of Christ. It is he who is our peace, and who made the two of us one by breaking down the barrier of hostility that kept us apart." (Eph. 2:13-14)

The Holy Year is important for us, as individuals, and as a community—a community of Christians seeking to build community in our troubled times. Spiritual renewal will enable us to combat more effectively the forces of hatred, violence and oppression which divide man from man today. It will help us to resist and reverse the process of demoralization which affects so many segments of our society. All true morality is founded on the divine law of God. The Holy Year will help us appreciate this fact more clearly and give it meaning in the troubled society in which we live.

For whom is the Holy Year intended? The obvious answer is, "everybody." Pope Paul has made this clear. Unlike some past Holy Years in which activity was centered in Rome, the 1975 Holy Year will emphasize efforts at spiritual renewal carried out in the local churches throughout the world. The special graces and spiritual benefits associated with the Holy Year will be available to all. The worldwide observance will indeed converge ultimately on Rome, and as in the past the Holy City will be thronged with pilgrims. But this Holy Year will be a truly universal event, an experience of faith in which all Catholics, and indeed all men of good will everywhere—are encouraged to take part in their own communities.

The Pope has described three kinds of persons for whom the spiritual renewal of the Holy Year is intended in particular: the person who, in the confusion of current ideas and ideologies, has "lost the certainty of truth"; the person who has become so absorbed in events outside himself that he "no longer possesses communication with himself"; and the person so caught up in a compulsive quest for pleasure that he finds himself at length "bored and disillusioned" by his way of life. In describing these three categories the Holy Father has indeed sketched a portrait of modern man.

As we begin our preparation for the Holy Year, it is helpful to bear in mind two other important events, one of which will precede it and the other of which will follow it. On the eve of Holy Year, in 1974, an international Synod of Bishops will take place in Rome. Its theme will be "The Evangelization of the Modern World." Bishops from many nations will study and recommend to the Holy Father ways in which the Church can more effectively bring the good News of Jesus Christ to the men and women of our times. The Holy Year, its emphasis on spiritual renewal and reconciliation, will

inevitably deepen and carry forward the Synod's effort to achieve greater understanding of the meaning of "evangelization" today.

The second event, in our own country, will be the observance of the U.S. Bicentennial in 1976. The Bicentennial challenges Americans—so sorely divided in recent years—to achieve new unity among themselves; a unity based on shared commitment to common moral and spiritual values. Again, the Holy Year's emphasis on renewal and reconciliation will help point us in the direction we must go to bring this about.

It is also significant that the Holy Year will mark the 10th anniversary of the close of the Second Vatican Council. The theme of the Council was renewal. The first and indispensable requisite of conciliar renewal is personal, spiritual, interior renewal. The Holy Year will be an occasion for us to review how far we have come in a decade and to re-commit ourselves to the work that remains in order to achieve the vast and inspiring purposes of the Council.

Today, Pentecost Sunday, is an appropriate time to begin our preparation for the Holy Year. We commemorate today the gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church—that Spirit who makes us one in Christ and inspires us, as he did the Apostles, to carry Christ's message far and wide into the world around us. Let us pray to the Spirit that the Holy Year will be for all of us a time of renewal and reconciliation, and that we will find in the Holy Year the grace and strength to continue in our own day the work begun on the first Pentecost.

God bless you all.

John Cardinal Krol
President,
National Conference of Catholic Bishops

PASTORAL DOCUMENT ON THE HOLY YEAR AND THE YOUNG

Central Committee for the HOLY YEAR

To the Episcopal Conferences, National Committees, Directors and Assistants of Youth Movements.

"I address myself most hopefully to the young, to whom I express my feelings of deep warmth and my paternal affection. In spite of some rather contradictory attitudes of theirs; some exhibitionism and positions of protest, I have faith in them. It is to them, to the young, to those who are searching for new ways of personal involvement, that I would like to address the disturbing words of the Gospel: 'Why do you stand here all day idle?' Their thirst for the absolute can not be sated by false ideologies or empty experiments. No, the young have within themselves the capability, the imagination, the force, the spirit of dedication and self-sacrifice to enable them to make their contribution to the salvation of their brothers: 'Go you also into the vineyard.' " ¹

Paul VI

PRELIMINARY REMARKS

The call of the Holy Year to a greater authenticity of life, naturally takes for granted that those who have the responsibility for proclaiming it to others will have already initiated their own personal process of self-examination and conversion. "The need

for consistency," says Paul VI, "compels us to emerge from our own mediocrity, from our lukewarmness, from trying to reconcile the full adherence to the Gospel, to which we are pledged, with the hedonistic permissiveness that is in vogue today, both in theory and in practice, and which leads us to betray the Cross." ²

The young ask us for positive signs of this conversion: a greater simplicity of life, in the spirit of Francis of Assisi, who by stripping himself, also pledged himself in the eyes of the community to a life of greater closeness to Jesus in his poverty, ridiculed as he was by men. The young want the Church to be a "sign."

The Holy Year also makes it impellent for those who must explain it to others to adopt the proper pastoral approach. "*The conditions of the society in which we live oblige us to revise our methods, to study all possible means of bringing to the people the Christian message in which modern man can find the answer to his dilemmas and the strength to carry out his own personal duty of human solidarity.*" ³ In the case of the young, one must naturally use the right method of approach and the type of language that they can understand.

The majority of young people today are not prepared to accept the message of the Holy Year. It is only right, therefore, that in bringing it to their attention, this be done step by step. This does not imply, however, that it should be emptied of any of its full spiritual significance, and be presented as one more movement for social reform, or that its message, which is a demanding one on the personal level, should be watered down to make it more acceptable to the masses. The great purpose of the Holy Year is this: "*to give authentic expression to the Christian life, coherent, interior, all-embracing, capable of 'renewing the face of the earth,' in the spirit of Christ.*" To reach this goal of total renewal "*each one of us is invited to examine closely his own mode of thinking, of feeling, of acting as compared to the ideal of a follower of Christ.*" ⁴

The Holy Year offers all those who are in close contact with young people a happy occasion for showing them the personality and the words of Christ as a model and a rule of life. They need Christ, the real Christ, who leads them to the Father, who proposes

ideals that are capable of arousing their enthusiasm; who frees them from the temptation to run from their responsibilities; who involves them in an authentic program of love for their brethren; who urges them to discover His likeness in all the disinherited creatures of the earth.

The Church does not indulge in wishful thinking, imagining that the majority of young people will answer the call of the Holy Year. The obstacles are enormous. They stem from the young people themselves and from the present condition of society. But the Church also knows that grace can operate its own miracles even in the most obdurate heart and see to it that even the deafest ear hear the words that contain eternal life. The task is not easy but it is filled with hope for the future. God's timing and that of the human soul do not always coincide with man's natural impatience to see results. But the very difficulty of the undertaking should spur one on to greater trust in God, to ask Him for the gift of His grace; it should teach one, with new urgency, the need for prayer, and the need to lead others, the young, to pray.

I.—YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE OBJECTIVES OF THE HOLY YEAR

What are the aims of the Holy Year and how are they looked on by the young people of today?

The first question which one must be prepared to answer is: "What is a Holy Year?" Then: "Why a Holy Year in this day and age?"

The Holy Year, from the very beginning, has been a special period devoted to renewal and reconciliation. Perhaps this explains why a Holy Year fits in today: at few moments in history has there been such a pressing need for human renewal and reconciliation.

"The Holy Year," the Pope says, has as its first aim *"the inner renewal of man: of the man who thinks and whose very thinking has made him lose his certitude of the Truth; of the working man, who has become so involved on the outside that he has lost his capacity for reflection; of the man who indulges in pleasure and has so many exciting means of amusement that he soon becomes bored and deluded. Man must renew himself from the inside."* ⁵

This is one of the more "youthful" passages in the Pope's talks on the Holy Year. It is so much to the point that it can be transmitted to them directly. Young people have become more and more alienated, more and more "emptied" by a type of civilization that does not integrate them and does not give them a sense of their own worth; more and more deluded by the mirages offered by a consumer society; more and more bored by a life without real ideals and without goals that are personally rewarding. Conversion would signify for them a return to their real authenticity, a repossession of their proper spiritual dimensions, an acceptance of the values brought by the risen Christ into the life of man and into society.

"We also need—Paul VI goes on to name the second great objective of the Holy Year, reconciliation—to establish an authentic, a living and happy relationship with God, to be reconciled with Him, in loving humility, so that, from this primary and constitutional harmony, the whole world of our human experience may express the need for and acquire a new potency to reach a reconciliation in charity and justice with all men, recognizing them all as our brothers. This reconciliation extends into other vast and very realistic fields: the Church itself, human society, politics, the ecumenical movement, peace." ⁶

It is not always easy to speak of reconciliation to young people, inclined as they are to accentuate tensions and conflicts. And yet, today, growing numbers of them are submitting themselves to a severe cross-examination on the violence that is plaguing society, on its lack of meaning, on the real values of love and of peace that are seen more and more as the only way for mankind to save itself from the whirlpool of violence.

On this level the biblical meaning of reconciliation, conceived as a refusal of violence and of human exploitation, and as a reaffirmation of the value of love, could open a breach for the young and lead them to a search for the only true fount of life and of love, which is God and to realize the fundamental importance for the validity of their own lives of establishing an intimate personal relationship with Him. The Holy Year offers a special occasion for everyone to get closer to God and to follow the only guide towards Him, the only true intermediary for our reconciliation with Him: the Risen Christ.

"A real religious, doctrinal and sacramental contact with Christ holds the first place in the revival of our Christian life, through the grace of the Holy Spirit." 7

Conversion and reconciliation: the two charges capable of making the positive qualities of youth, to which Paul VI alludes, explode into action:

"Is it not true, perhaps, that in this new generation of young people a positive attitude towards the truth, towards justice and towards love, is being born? Towards prayer and the faith; towards the innocent search for a Church which is humble and good, capable of giving a new meaning and a new value to life, and to plan for a vigorous and active peace of universal import? We sense these new pulsations in the soul of the young: we listen to them with respect and with approval; and we trust that the sincerity that can renew all things may exercise its mysterious and truth-revealing influence upon them." 8

II.—THE PRESENTATION OF THE HOLY YEAR

a) *One language—one message*

Who are the young people about whom we are speaking?

Today everyone speaks of "the youth" as though it were a single socio-psychological grouping. On the contrary, young people are divided and subdivided into innumerable different categories.

As far as the Holy Year itself is concerned and its presentation to the young one must take into account their different situations today in relationship to the faith.

Without calculating a minority who are spiritually well prepared and actively engaged, or another group declaredly atheistic, one can make a conventional grouping of the rest in the following way:

—young people who by and large practice their faith but go through periods of crisis and are searching for a more meaningful life;

—those who are religious by affiliation but not practicing, except occasionally, and yet might not be insensible to a sum-

mons to a more authentic faith, if it were presented to them in a convincing way;

—those who are indifferent, either through ignorance or because of a definite rejection of religion, and, who, today, are the great majority.

In spite of their diversities, young people today do not like to be classified and labelled, nor do they like the discriminations that an adult mentality is often inclined to make. Hence the need, in presenting the Holy Year to the young, to address them with one language, as Christ did: rather than an abstractly theological language, which would be considered dry and anachronistic, the language of the Gospels should be used, which is what many young people today are asking for, attracted as they are by its extreme simplicity, by its universality, by its profound human contents.

Using this language, the message to be delivered should also be profoundly human; for a "new" society, more just and more fraternal, to be built through the goodwill of all. A message that calls for the solidarity of each individual and of every group in a concrete commitment on behalf of every human being and, in the first place, on behalf of the poor, of those who are shut out, the oppressed, those who live on the fringes of society. A message which takes into account the existing commitments of those who are asked to participate and of the different conditions in which they live in the various localities.

"The joys and the hopes"—they are the words of Gaudium et Spes—"the sorrows and the anguish of men today, of the poor above all and of all those who suffer, are also the joys and the hopes, the sorrows and the anguish of the disciples of Christ, and there is nothing genuinely human that does not find an echo in their heart."

It is a question of putting into action the "new humanism" of which Paul VI speaks.⁹ One must teach the young to love God, so that they may love their fellowman, and to love their fellowman, so that they may learn to love God. In fact, the Apostle says: "he who loves God should love his brother also," and "how can he who does not love his brother whom he sees, love God, whom he does not see?"¹⁰ The love of God is the source of love for

mankind, and love for mankind is the sign and the expression of an authentic love for God. Where there is love, there is God and where God is, there is His Kingdom. But the Kingdom of God must be prepared. His Kingdom is being prepared when young people are trying to free themselves from evil, to obey their conscience and to emerge from their mediocrity and their egoism; above all, when they begin to assume their responsibilities toward each other.

In this gradual approach to the full message of the Holy Year, the specific responsibility of the Christian emerges with all its irreplaceable force: he is "the witness" to the risen Christ, from whom he derives a very special commitment towards his fellowmen and towards their salvation. It is from the validity of this testimony that the young may begin to understand the importance for themselves of a more direct acquaintanceship with Him who said of Himself: "*I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life.*" They need so much to know that Christ is the brother who makes sense of their work, of their sufferings, of their aspirations and efforts on behalf of their brothers.

*"Do we want to be authentic followers of Christ—asks the Holy Father—do we want to expand ourselves, through the solidarity of our love, towards all our brothers far and near, or do we prefer to close the circle of our social consciousness within the limits of our own narrow interests, walled in by the bitterness of our individual and collective egoism?"*¹¹

b) *The Church: the announcer of the message*

The message of the Holy Year, expressed in a language which is intelligible to the young, is proclaimed by the Church. She, in her turn, must present them with her credentials. If the Church repeated the question today asked by Christ of His Apostles, and referred it to herself: "*Who do you say I am?*" what might their answer be? The reply of the majority would be: "We don't know and we don't care." For many, the Church represents a problem, an obstacle, even though their attitude often reflects their general attitude towards every institution. Hence the need to show them the real countenance of the Church, in a step by step presentation, beginning with the Church open to the world not above nor facing the world, but immersed in the world, in an attitude, not of

suspicion, but of esteem and love. A Church taking part in a dialogue with all the people and all the organizations that are sincerely concerned with the building of a society that is more just and more respectful of the dignity and the liberty of man. A Church actively engaged, together with all men of good-will, in a continuous effort for the full recognition of the inalienable rights of every person, without distinction, in every sector of human activity.

The great social encyclicals, the journeys of Paul VI to the United Nations, to New York and Geneva, to India, to the Holy Land, to Australia, to Hong Kong, to the Philippines, to Colombia, to Africa . . . are so many steps taken by the Church "expert in humanity" towards the enlightenment and the transformation of the world.

"The Church in the world is not an end in itself: it is at the service of all the peoples . . . it is the messenger of love, the worker of peace": so Paul VI expressed himself during the Second Vatican Council.

But the Church is not a mere social force leavening the mass; she is the mystery of man's communion in Christ with the Father; it is in this essential quality of hers that she finds the force to expand and leaven all that is human. This communion comes to fruition in the local Churches, gathered in the Universal Church. Seen in this light one can see the full dimensions of the mission of the Bishops and of the Pope, called by Christ to serve their brethren, and to be the symbol and the guardians of unity among the faithful. The pilgrimage also acquires its full significance, first to the cathedrals, where the Bishop is, and then, to Rome, to the tomb of the Apostle Peter, where the Pope is: the pilgrimage, the culmination of the Holy Year.

This is the Church that the young must finally get to know, so that the fruits of God's grace may come to full maturity.

c) *A presentation that takes into account a variety of different situations*

If the message of the Holy Year is one and the language used in speaking to the youth should be the same one, nevertheless, in presenting it, the diverse attitudes and varying needs of the young

people in the different nations and regions should be taken into full account. One can speak today, in general, of a youth culture; this is affected, however, by innumerable historical, geographical and environmental circumstances. Every nation and every region can be said to have a youth that is different, subdivided into different social and cultural categories that, in their turn, affect their perception of certain problems and their reaction to them.

In speaking of the Holy Year and in launching the projects connected with it, attention must be paid to the plurality of these situations and to the gradualness with which youth groups tend to develop. The availability of young people, in relationship to the call of Christ, varies from one individual to another and from one group to another.

Being attentive to the different local situations also means paying attention to the various youth movements that already exist on the international and the local level, many of which manifest the tendency of the young to overcome every kind of discrimination. Before starting new enterprises, one should give careful consideration to the existing ones, many of which have great originality, precisely, because of the spontaneous way in which they came into being. If the movements are valid ones, they could be involved in the great program of the Holy Year.

"The Holy Year—said the Pope—is not intended to suspend, or suffocate or upset the variety and richness of the authentic movements already operating within the Church. The Holy Year should rather infuse new energy into them, and include them, if possible, in some way into its own general program. This involves, in this case, their acceptance of a new and profound source of inspiration, rather than their having to fit themselves into a particular mould." ¹²

d) *Encourage the enterprise of the young in planning their Holy Year*

Among the characteristic attitudes of the young today are their rejection of authority viewed as an imposition, their urgent request for responsibility, their just wish to participate in making the decisions that concern them directly, their desire for recognition and for an autonomous role in society. Whoever wishes to obtain their cooperation in any project, must take into account their

mentality. It would prove negative to try and give them lists of instructions and programs already worked out. They should be encouraged to express themselves in their own way and to invent their own programs, in harmony with the final objectives.

In this same spirit, every encouragement should be given to the young people in the formulation of projects that are in keeping with the purposes of the Holy Year. Special attention should be given to group activity: it is here that the young have their best chance to accomplish something worthwhile, as well as developing a more Christian way of doing things together. This would be a partial answer to their request for concrete responsibilities. It is also in full accord with sound Christian pedagogy making them more accustomed to reflection, to reasoning things out and to accepting the "risks" of making decisions. Lastly, it would enrich them with new experiences of life within the Church and it would enrich the Church itself. All of which is in harmony with the purpose of the Holy Year.

III.—THE CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS OF THE HOLY YEAR EXPRESSED IN YOUTHFUL TERMS

The risk of an undertaking of such remote historical roots as the Holy Year is that of making it appear detached from the realities of the present, anchored to the past and therefore incapable of any real impact on society today.

Hence the need to explain the constituent elements of the Holy Year, using terms and expressions that do not cloud their real significance. Some examples of how these traditional terms might be translated into a "younger" language:

Holy Year might also be presented as a year of solidarity, of communion, of hope, of justice, of liberation, of love, of trust, of reconciliation, being careful, naturally, not to empty these expressions of their full Christian meaning.

Pilgrimage might be a joining together in a spirit of humility and of poverty, in an attitude of humble searching. "A pilgrimage" would be meeting together to exchange experiences, to engage in a dialogue, to understand each other, to express the joy of walking along together, among themselves, with the Bishop, with the Pope. "A pilgrimage" would be working together on a

common project and planning new ways for humanity. The jump from this to the pilgrimages properly so-called would not be a long one; these would become a search for closer communion with the faithful of yesterday and a "march of faith" towards the future.

Penance, so well illustrated in the parables of the prodigal son and of the unfaithful servant, is renunciation, it is true, but it is, above all, the sign of one's conversion to God and to one's fellowman, of a "getting out" of oneself. In a gradual presentation, penance would be a close examination of the march of mankind and of the contribution that youth is making towards its progress; a consciousness of human limitations, of the weaknesses, the inconstancy and the lack of consistency of young people as well; a recognition, on the part of each individual, of his fundamental egoism, of the poverty of his personal contribution and of his great responsibilities towards his brethren; the refusal of any factious spirit in the group and of any intolerance. It would be a turning towards the poor, the aged, the outcast, not in mere words, but also in deeds and at the cost of personal sacrifice. It would be an acceptance of authority, recognizing the role that authority plays in society, and showing love and respect for those who exercise it. It would be a complete availability on the part of each individual to accept without reservations the message of Christ and to apply it in its entirety to his own way of life. It would be a change-over from the idea of a God far removed from the human drama, to that of the biblical God, who places Himself at the head of our march of liberation, of God the Father who loves us as His sons, of Christ who saves us, of the Spirit who is love and communion.

Indulgences, is one of the terms that are least attractive to youth and that can easily be misunderstood, also because of certain past simplifications. They might be presented, in a continuous crescendo, as a sense of comparticipation in the riches of the community which are open to all, without exception; as the acceptance of the love which others have for us and which saves us from our own poverty and inadequacy; as spiritual solidarity among men, united in one Saviour; as a willingness to enter into the great circulation of values promoted by all those who have lived their Christianity with greater authenticity; as a saving insertion into the universe of Christ and of our brothers who

prolong the mystery of salvation; up to the recognition of the fact that this vital interchange was entrusted by Christ to Peter who through this communication promotes greater solidarity in the whole Church.

IV.—HOLY YEAR: AN APPEAL FOR CONSISTENCY

The Holy Year, as presented by the Pope, presupposes that in the hearts of men there is a desire for peace and for a greater closeness to their brothers. The invitation to make a personal examination of conscience, and to measure one's own availability for a program of renewal and of reconciliation, is its logical consequence and may be accepted by any person of goodwill.

The Holy Father believes that two classes of people should take a particular interest in what he calls the "catholic realism" of the Holy Year: "*those who have chosen Christ, in one way or another, as their Master of life,*" and the young: "*they are the first to speak to us of authenticity.*"¹³

*"How can one announce Christ our Lord—the Pope asks himself—to the young, who are the most likely to understand him and to follow him, who are tired and almost nauseated by the formulae that modern life, so overburdened, so rich, so opulent, has poured out on them? . . . In this vision filled with protest they can find the stimulus to live in poverty and to search for the truth. The young people today want to be authentic; they want to be what they are and what they should be."*¹⁴

If the young demand coherency, if they rightly condemn Pharisaism and hypocrisy, if they esteem people who are consistent, the Holy Year, in its turn, can rightly ask them to show coherency and sincerity of purpose. For those who claim to be Christians, this call for coherency will naturally have even more peremptory tones.

"The time has come—says the Pope—to measure our fidelity to Christ, in the conflict which it endures, with our acceptance of a way of thinking and of acting that ignores his Gospel and his way of salvation . . . Do we really want to be authentic followers of Christ, or merely names on the list of those who have been baptized and therefore easily Pharasaical and accused by the very

*principles and by the obligations that we ourselves claim to recognize?"*¹⁵

There have been many youth movements in recent times that have borne the name of Christ. Young people have been deeply attracted for many reasons, some authentic and others less so, to the figure of Christ. On the occasion of the Holy Year, one must be ready to give an answer to the many burning questions that the young people will ask. One answer is also the proposal of an ideal: the imitation of Christ, without any reservations.

One must show Christ as living among the people of today, freeing them from falsehood so that they may live in authenticity of purpose; freeing them from egoism, so that they may give themselves more completely to all mankind, while still preferring those for whom Christ himself showed a special preference: the poor; freeing them from loneliness, by calling them near Mary to the warmth of a community; freeing them from fear, by giving back to each one his true human dignity.

*"When my thoughts reach this conclusion—they are the words of Paul VI—there come to my mind, I do not know by what association of ideas, the words of Christ in the Gospel, so simple and so powerful, when he calls on his disciples to follow him: 'Come after me!', and Peter in particular: 'Follow me!', and when he calls on all the miserable ones of the earth: 'Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened'. The call of Christ resounds in the depths of the soul, with all its sweetness and all its vehemence, at the very moment when our present position, static, perhaps, and lazy, is faced with the mysterious and fascinating ocean of the contemporary world; it resounds as an alternative, at one and the same time free and imperious, between the Gospel and the confused culture that is at our disposal, between Christ and the world; chose, come!"*¹⁶

These words are addressed to everyone, but they have a special significance for the young: it is they, more than the rest, who must face "the mysterious and fascinating ocean of the contemporary world"; it is they who feel deep within them an anguished fear of the future.

"... come to me, Christ invites us, not so as to leave and disqualify the world—the Pope continues—but to give the world its

true value, recognizing that it is indeed splendid but also equivocal and, in the end, disappointing; come to me, Christ says to us, to serve and save the world, to love it as I, Christ, loved it giving my life for its salvation." ¹⁷

The young feel the need, perhaps unconsciously, for a guide. This is revealed by their search for authentic "models." It is the responsibility of those who must present the Holy Year to the young, to facilitate their encounter with Christ, so that they, too, may be able to say: "We have met him, we have listened to him; we have felt the fascination of his teaching, we have accepted the gift of his mysterious words, we have lifted ourselves up so as to be united with him and to be able to say with St. Paul: 'It is now no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me'." ¹⁸

Maximilian Card. de Fürstenberg
President

Mgr. Antonio Mazza
Secretary

¹ Discourse of Paul VI: June 22, 1973.

² Discourse of Paul VI: July 11, 1973.

³ Discourse of Paul VI: June 22, 1973.

⁴ Discourse of Paul VI: June 20, 1973.

⁵ Discourse of Paul VI: May 9, 1973.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Discourse of Paul VI: July 4, 1973.

⁸ Discourse of Paul VI: July 11, 1973.

⁹ *Populorum Progressio*: 20.

¹⁰ I Ep. John: 4, 20-21.

¹¹ Discourse of Paul VI: May 16, 1973.

¹² Discourse of Paul VI: June 20, 1973.

¹³ Discourse of Paul VI: July 11, 1973.

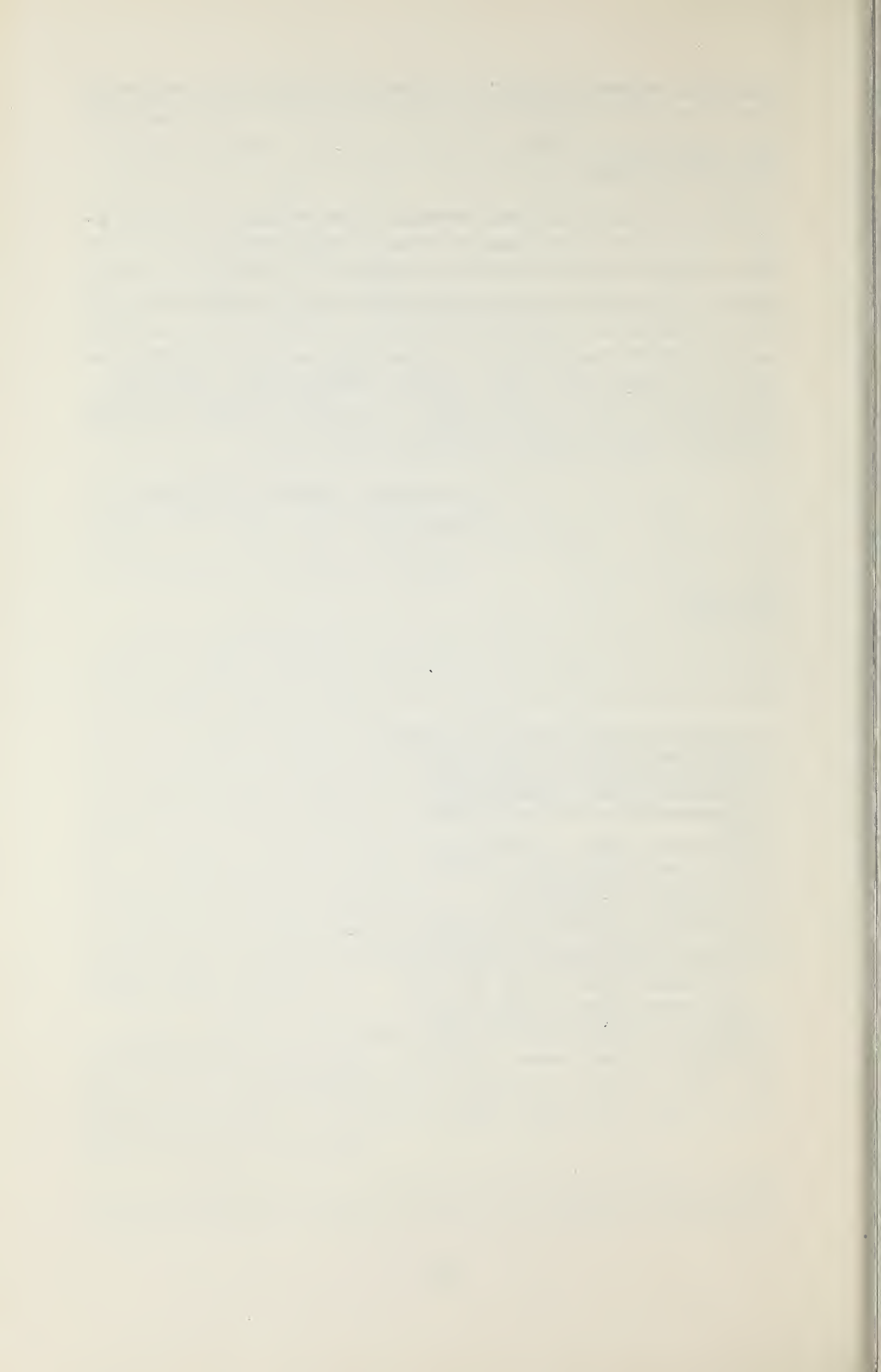
¹⁴ Discourse of Paul VI: Nov. 10, 1973.

¹⁵ Discourse of Paul VI: May 16, 1973.

¹⁶ Discourse of Paul VI: July 11, 1973.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Discourse of Paul VI: Nov. 10, 1973.



Paul VI Announces Holy Year for 1975

AN OCCASION FOR INTERIOR RENEWAL AND RECONCILIATION

General Audience, May 9, 1973

Today there is something we would like to tell you, something which we believe is important for the spiritual life of the Church. It is this: after having prayed and meditated, we have decided to celebrate in 1975 a Holy Year, when the interval of twenty-five years fixed by our predecessor Paul II in the Papal Bull *Ineffabilis Providentia* of April 17, 1470 will have expired. The Holy Year, which in canonical language is known as the "Jubilee," meant in the biblical tradition of the Old Testament a year of special public observance, with abstention from normal work, a return to the original distribution of land, the cancellation of existing debts and the freeing of Hebrew slaves (cf. Lev. 25:8 ff.). In the history of the Church, as you know, the Jubilee was instituted by Boniface VIII in the year 1300, for a purely spiritual purpose. It consisted in making a penitential pilgrimage to the tombs of the Apostles Peter and Paul. Dante was among those who took part in it and he gives a description of the crowds thronging the city of Rome (cf. *Inferno* 18, 28-23). Later, in 1500, there was added to the Jubilee the opening of the Holy Doors of the Basilicas which were to be visited. This was intended not only to facilitate the influx of penitents but also to symbolize easier access to divine mercy through the gaining of the jubilee indulgence.

In line with the Council

We have asked ourselves if such a tradition should be continued in our times, which are so different from times gone by and so conditioned both by the style of religion given to ecclesial life by the recent Council and by the practical lack of interest of many parts of the modern world in the ritual expression of other centuries. We

have immediately however been convinced that the celebration of the Holy Year not only can be consistently fitted in with the spiritual line adopted by the Council itself—which it is our responsibility to develop faithfully—but also can very well be harmonized with and contribute to the tireless and loving efforts being made by the Church to meet the moral needs of our time, to interpret its deepest aspirations and to accept honestly certain forms of its preferred external manifestations.

Essential concept of Holy Year

In view of the variety of purposes it is necessary to stress what is the essential concept of the Holy Year. It is the interior renewal of man: of the man who thinks and who in his thought has lost the certainty of truth; of the man who works and who in his work has realized that he is so extroverted that he no longer fully possesses communication with himself; of the man who enjoys life and who so assumes himself and has so many exciting ways to gain pleasurable experience that he soon feels bored and disillusioned. Man must be renewed from within. This is what the Gospel calls conversion, penance and a change of heart. It is the process of selfrebirth. It is simple, like a clear and courageous act of conscience and at the same time complex, like a long, instructive and reforming apprenticeship. It is also a moment of grace, and one usually does not obtain grace without bowing one's head. And we do not think we err in detecting in modern man profound dissatisfaction, satiety coupled with insufficiency, unhappiness produced by false formulas for happiness, with which he is intoxicated, and dismay at not knowing how to enjoy the thousand and one pleasures that civilization offers him in abundance. In other words, man needs an interior renewal such as that hoped for by the Council.

Now the Holy Year is oriented precisely to this personal and interior renewal, which under certain aspects is also exterior. It is an easy and at the same time extraordinary therapy which should bring spiritual well-being to every conscience and indirectly, at least to some extent, to the attitude of society. This is the general theme of the next Holy Year, which is also centered upon another special theme that is oriented to practical living: reconciliation.

Reconciliation

The term "reconciliation" evokes the opposite concept of a break. What break would we have to mend in order to reach that reconciliation which is the condition for the desired renewal of the jubilee? What break? But it is not perhaps enough to use this word reconciliation, which involves a whole program, to realize that our life is disturbed by too many breaks, too much disharmony, too much disorder to be able to enjoy the gifts of personal and collective life according to their ideal finality? We need above all to reestablish a genuine, vital and happy relationship with God, to be reconciled with him in humility and love, so that from this first basic harmony the whole world of our experience may express a need and acquire a virtue of reconciliation in charity and justice with men, to whom we immediately give the new title of "brothers." Moreover, reconciliation takes place in other vast and very real areas: within the ecclesial community itself, in society, in the relations among nations, in ecumenism, in the sphere of peace and so forth. If God permits us to celebrate the Holy Year, it will have many things to tell us in this regard.

Local churches first

Let us now limit ourselves to pointing out an important aspect of the structure of the next Holy Year. According to the centuries-old custom, the Holy Year has its focal point in Rome. And it will still be so, but with this innovation. The conditions prescribed for acquiring special spiritual benefits will this time be anticipated and granted to the local Churches, so that the whole Church spread throughout the world may immediately be able to profit from this great occasion of renewal and reconciliation. In this way the whole Church will be better able to prepare for the climax and conclusion of the Holy Year, which will be celebrated in Rome in the year 1975, and which will give to the traditional pilgrimage to the tombs of the Apostles its traditional meaning for those who are able and wish to make the pilgrimage. And this important and salutary spiritual and penitential movement, which involves the entire Church and which will be accompanied by the granting of special indulgences, will begin on the coming feast of Pentecost, June 10. On former occasions, the extension of the Holy Year came after its celebration

in Rome; now this extension will precede the celebration. Everyone can see how this innovation also includes an intention of honoring with more evident and effective communion the local Churches which are living members of the one universal Church of Christ.

This will suffice for the present. But by the grace of God we shall have many other things to say on this matter. May our Apostolic Blessing be with all of you.

Renewal and reconciliation

*Paul VI stresses significance of Pentecost
as opening of Holy Year in local churches*

General audience, June 6, 1973

As you know, Sunday next, June 10, is the feast of Pentecost, the feast that commemorates and aims at renewing the descent of the Holy Spirit, the animator, sanctifier, unifier of the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ. And as you likewise know, this forthcoming solemnity will mark the beginning, in the local churches, that is, in the ecclesial communities each presided over by its own Bishop, of that religious event, or rather that spiritual movement which we call "Holy Year," followed by the celebration proper in the third quarter of our century, in 1975. You will hear more about it again, a great deal, everywhere. Prepare to understand it, to live it; and specifically in its general purpose. They are a renewal of Christian life, such as is demanded and must be possible in the deep and stormy process of the metamorphosis of our times, and a reconciliation of minds and things, at which we think we must aim if we wish to reconstitute in us and outside us that superior order, that "kingdom of God," on which the present and future destinies of humanity depend. Renewal and reconciliation: it seems to us that these must be the logical and general consequences, in the history of the Church and of mankind, of the Council, springing like a river of salvation and civilization from its generating source.

Why from Pentecost?

Why does this fact start from Pentecost? Not only because this beautiful feast, which we can define as the historical birth of the Church, offers a propitious, inspiring occasion, but above all because we hope, we beseech that the Holy Spirit, whose mysterious and sensible mission we celebrate at Pentecost, will be the principal Operator of the fruits desired from the Holy Year. This, too, will be one of the most important and fruitful themes of spirituality proper to the Holy Year: the Christology and particularly the Eccle-

siology of the Council must be succeeded by a new study and a new cult of the Holy Spirit, precisely as the indispensable complement of the teaching of the Council. Let us hope that the Lord will help us to be disciples and teachers of this successive school of his: Jesus, leaving the visible scene of this world, left two factors to carry out his work of salvation in the world: his Apostles and his Spirit (cf. Congar, *Esquisses du mystère de l'Eglise*, p. 129, ff.).

We do not wish to enter this magnificent theological field now. For the elementary purposes of this brief preparatory sermon it is enough for us to point out, in the first place, that the action of the Spirit, in the ordinary economy of the divine plan, is carried out in our spirits in respect for our freedom, in fact, with our very cooperation, if only as the condition of divine action in us. We must at least open the window to the entrance of the breath and the light of the Spirit.

Let us say a word about this opening, this availability of ours to the mysterious action of the Spirit. Let us ask ourselves what the psychological and moral states of our souls must be, in order that they may receive the "dulcis Hospes animae." This would be enough to weave interminable treatises of spiritual, ascetic and mystical life. Let us now reduce these states to two only, at least for the sake of being easily remembered, making them correspond to the field preferred by the action of the Paraclete, that is, the Holy Spirit who becomes our assistant, consoler, advocate.

Man's consent required

The first field is man's "heart." It is true that the action of grace may leave out of consideration the subjective correspondence of the one who receives it (a child, for example, a sick person, a dying man), but normally man's conscience must be in a state of consent, at least immediately after the impulse of the supernatural action of grace. The Holy Spirit has his favorite cell in the human being, the heart (cf. Rom. 5, 5). It would take too long to explain what the word "heart" means in biblical language. Let us be content now to describe the heart as the intimate center, free, deep, personal, of our spiritual life. Anyone who does not have a spiritual life of his own lacks the ordinary capacity to receive the Holy Spirit, to listen to his soft, sweet voice, to experience his inspirations, to enjoy his charisms. The diagnosis of modern man leads us to see

in him an extroverted being, who lives a great deal outside himself and little in himself, like an instrument that is more receptive to the language of the senses, and less to that of thought and conscience. The practical conclusion at once exhorts us to praise of silence, not of unconscious, idle and mute silence, but the silence that subdues noises and exterior clamor and which is able to listen; to listen in depth to the voices, the sincere voices, of conscience and to those springing up in the concentration of prayer, to the ineffable voices of contemplation. This is the first field of action of the Holy Spirit. It will be well for us to remember it.

Flight from true communion of ecclesial charity

And what is the other? The other is "communio," that is, the society of brothers united by faith and charity in one divine-human organism, the mystical Body of Christ. It is the Church. It is adherence to that mystical Body, animated by the Holy Spirit, who has, in the community of the faithful, hierarchically united, authentically assembled in the name and the authority of the Apostles, his pentecostal upper room. So we might well consider whether certain ways of seeking the Spirit, which prefer to isolate themselves in order to escape both from the directive ministry of the Church and from the impersonal crowd of unknown brethren, are on the right path. What Spirit could a selfish communion meet, one that arises from a flight from the true communion of ecclesial charity? What experiences, what charisms could make up for the absence of unity, the supreme encounter with God?

And so the program of the Holy Year, inaugurated on the feast of the Holy Spirit, is at once placed on the way of spiritual life, where He, the Gift of Love, inhabits and awakens and forms and sanctifies our individual personality; and the way of the society of the "saints," that is, the Church of the faithful, where salvation is a continual rejoicing, for everyone.

May our Apostolic Blessing, Sons and Brothers, direct you and follow you along the right way.

Address of Paul VI to the Central Committee for the Holy Year

On June 7, 1973, the Holy Father received the members of the Central Committee for the Holy Year. His Holiness delivered the following address.

We extend our cordial and respectful greeting to you—Lord Cardinal, Venerable Brothers and beloved Sons—who make up the Central Committee for the Holy Year. We ourself recently set it up, calling you to be part of it, on the same day on which we made to the Church and to the world the happy announcement of the Jubilee that will be celebrated in Rome in 1975, as the crowning part of a whole vast movement of spiritual renewal which will begin in the local Churches next Sunday, the feast of Pentecost.

This desired and welcome meeting, which coincides with your first plenary meeting, is of great comfort to us since we see in you—coming from various countries, belonging to numerous nations, and representatives of all the sectors of the People of God—a promise and a guarantee of success for the important initiative that is so close to our heart.

Spiritual purposes

Faithful to the fundamental lines and to the orientations that we have already had the opportunity to set forth and give in not a few circumstances, and to which, God willing, we will return; animated by a spirit of initiative to put these indications duly into practice and promote their enlightened and welcome reception everywhere, in an attitude of generous, complete availability and brotherly service to the local Churches and to the respective Committees for the Holy Year, news of the constitution of which is reaching us, to our consolation; far-sighted and industrious in taking care in a worthy way of the many and complex organizational aspects, particularly with a view to the pious pilgrimages that will bring innumerable

faithful to Rome, you are called to carry out a necessary and irreplaceable function, in keeping with the very nature of the Church which is also a visible and organic society and therefore requires adequate instruments.

But, like all Church organisms, your Committee also is in the service of higher aims. Therefore allow us to stress the exclusively spiritual purposes of the Holy Year and of the whole movement connected with it and which is now starting; its unmistakable character as a spiritual, penitential, religious, socio-charitable event connected with worship; as an extraordinary occasion of grace, renewal of morals, reconciliation with God and with our brothers, in a word, of holiness, as the very name Holy Year emphasizes.

Pressing needs

These are exciting ideals, pressing urgencies: a great and noble cause, which urges and encourages you to work with commitment and a spirit of faith, and which induces you to sustain and give efficacy to your responsibility with prayer. From 1300 every Holy Year has always been a highly significant moment, a particularly important stage in the history of the Church, of her spirituality, her beneficial influence on civil society itself. The validity of the one we are preparing to celebrate is proved by centuries-old experience and at the same time revived and strengthened by the salutary *aggiornamento* promoted by Vatican II. You can easily find the mark of this *aggiornamento* in the fresh approach we have given to the unfolding of this extraordinary new moment of grace for the whole Church.

Continue, therefore, with Christian serenity and trust, with the fulfillment of the ecclesial mission that has been entrusted to you; and let the Apostolic Blessing which we paternally impart to you, invoking all divine assistance on your persons and your work, accompany you, with our gratitude.

Personal, interior aspect of the Holy Year Movement

General audience, June 20, 1973

Let us speak again of the Holy Year, which began in the local Churches on the feast of Pentecost. We will speak of it again because we would like to see, round this "Holy Year" formula, as we have already said, not only the fulfillment, but the development of a historic moment in the spiritual life of the Church, not just an event, but a religious movement. This conception seems to us, in the first place, in conformity with the motive of this celebration: renewal and reconciliation, aimed at stamping a permanent and general renewal on the religious and moral conscience of our times, inside and, if possible, outside the Catholic Church.

In the second place, this view of the Holy Year, it seems to us, intends to reflect in the reality of thought and morals the great plan of the Council, and prevent its salutary teaching from being relegated to the archives as voices of the past, but rather that they should operate in a masterly way in the actual life of the present and the future generation. It must be a school that becomes life.

Call for new inspiration

In the third place, we wish to give importance and extension to this extraordinary religious expression, which we call the Holy Year, because the historical and social circumstances of our times are so heavy and overpowering with regard to our faith and its consequent existential logic that a necessity of seriousness, incisiveness and strength must, it seems to us, sustain the "movement" of the Holy Year right from the beginning. Either it will win recognition as a general, serious and united effort, and therefore a really renewing one, or it will at once be extinguished and exhausted as a sterile attempt, good and meritorious perhaps, but in practice shortlived and ineffective.

At this point some preliminary observations arise, which it is well to keep in mind right now. The doubt, or rather the fear, may

arise in some people that the Holy Year movement will oppose so many other spiritual and pastoral movements, the programs of which are already tested by long and clear experience, or already approved by the authority of the Church, or recognized as legitimate and free expressions of the vitality of the People of God. No, we answer: the Holy Year does not intend to suspend, choke and sweep away the variety and riches of the authentic manifestations already going on in the ecclesial world. The Holy Year would rather imbue them with new energy, and at the most, if possible, connect them in some way with its own general program, which calls in this case rather for the acceptance of a deep, new inspiration than for a specific and concrete adherence to precise particular frameworks.

Not triumphalism

Others may think that it is desired to celebrate the Holy Year in a triumphalistic style, with trumpetings and overwhelming exterior events, giving the exterior aspect of the movement derived from it an importance greater than other aspects of religious and Catholic life, for which, however, it is necessary to claim an importance that cannot be renounced, perhaps even a superior importance. On this point, which can constitute a strong objection to the celebration of the Holy Year, we wish to invite the good to a twofold reflection. It is, indeed possible, please God, that the Holy Year will have the support of the people, flocking crowds, the spectacular appearance of multitudes. It is an ecclesial, universal fact; that some moments it reflects the catholic character of vocation to the Gospel. It is humanity, in its immense extension, that we make the object of our invitation and our interest; also and above all on this occasion we wish to give to the heart of the Church the dimensions of the world! Should we protest, then, if the phenomenon takes on exceptional quantitative forms and proportions? Is it not the mystery of the unity of the multiplicity of her univocal and expanded riches? We will all enjoy it, if the Lord bestows on us the grace of seeing "the spaces of charity" so widened (cf. St. Augustine, *Sermo* 69; PL. 38, 440-441).

But, in the second place, let us say at once that this spectacular, and perhaps touristic result, is not specifically the aim of the Holy Year. If a purpose of universal communion cannot but exist in the intentions of an affirmation that concerns the whole Church in her

essential properties of unity and catholicity, it is not, however, the primary one as effect in time, nor as a value in itself, because it presupposes and demands the attainment of another prior aim: the conversion of hearts, the interior renewal of spirits, the personal adherence of consciences. First the individual, conscious and aware, then the crowd.

Interior conversion

We would like this first purpose of the Holy Year to be given supreme importance. We must aim first and foremost at an interior renewal, a conversion of personal sentiments, liberation from conventional imitation of others, revision of our outlook, deploring, more than anything else, our shortcomings before God, and towards the society of men our brothers, and with regard to the concept that everyone must have of himself, as a son of God, as a Christian, as a member of the Church. It is a new philosophy of life, if we may say so, that must be formed in every member of the Mystical Body of Christ; everyone of us is invited to rectify his way of thinking, feeling and acting with regard to the ideal model of the follower of Christ, while being a loyal and hard-working citizen of contemporary civil society.

This great conception of the Holy Year: to give Christian life an authentic expression, consistent, interior, full, capable of "renewing the face of the earth" in the Spirit of Christ, must be clearly present in our minds, with one very important immediate consequence: the accomplishment of this project begins at once, and takes place in the personal conscience of each of us. We would like this personal and interior aspect of the great spiritual enterprise, now begun, to head all programs. Each one of us must feel called upon to work out on himself, in himself, the religious, psychological, moral and operative renewal which the Holy Year aims at achieving.

Personal examination

With this first practical consequence: we must all verify, or carry out the introspective examination about the main line of our life, that is, about the free and responsible choice of our own vocation, our own mission, our own definition, as a man and as a Christian. A vital examination!

And a second consequence, far easier, but far more insistent: it is necessary to resume the practice of good, of honesty, seeking what is better in little things, that is, in the sequence of our ordinary actions, where our defects lie in wait for us at every moment, sometimes disastrously; and where, on the contrary, integrity of action can be easily perfected, if we remember the teaching of the Lord Jesus: "He who is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much" (Lk. 16, 10). This is something to begin with immediately, for everyone, with our Apostolic Blessing.

To Restore Christian Love

General audience, October 17, 1973

Beloved sons and daughters,

As we have already said many times, we are now preparing for the Holy Year and in that preparation there are two theme-words which we repeat continually: renewal and reconciliation. In the first word, renewal we can see, as it were, all the effort, all the spiritual, moral and social fruit which each one individually and the Church as a whole hope to obtain for themselves subjectively; in the second, reconciliation, there seems to be the foreshadowing of a more objective action or rather of a relationship which goes beyond the personal or collective boundaries of our own interior life and refer to the exterior conditions in which we live and by which we are surrounded. The terms are, in any case, clear to all: we must renew ourselves within and outside we must bring peace. Within and without. This division is simplistic and must be integrated into real life.

Let us see on this occasion, for example, what we mean by the second theme-word, reconciliation. What is its significance? To whom and to what does it refer?

Becoming aware

Let us note at once that it presupposes a breaking away which we must remedy and repair. It presupposes disorder, contrast, enmity, separation, loneliness, a break in the harmony of a design which requires integrity and perfection and which corrects and overcomes our selfish isolation and restores in and around us the circulation of love. Are we aware of the need for such a reconciliation? This is most important. It represents something quite new in the field of human awareness. Firstly, in man's awareness of himself; is he not more fully and truly man if, in his own awareness of himself he perceives, together with his own tyrannical selfishness, also his own narrow existence, his own selfcenteredness, his own

isolation, his inadequacy. Secondly, in the realm of social awareness: the need for others is engraved in our very being. No man is sufficient unto himself. How then is each one to integrate himself in his relationship with others? Is this relationship to be one of conflict or is it to be orderly?

Lastly, and most important, is the field of religious awareness. Here we have the apex of our consciousness of our own position in the world of Being and of the destiny in store for each one of us. Let us reflect carefully then and let us realize that we need reconciliation on these three fronts, the solipsistic, the social and the religious. We ourselves are not surrounded by perfect order. From all sides we receive the sting of deficiency, of reproach, of remorse, of danger. A psychological analysis would bring us too far afield. Let us, for the moment, be content to dwell briefly on the three aspects (the three fronts, as we said before) already mentioned of our awareness of the need for reconciliation.

The law of love

The first, then, is our inner restlessness which arises from our awareness that although we are living we are inadequate, insufficient in ourselves, full of energies and deficiencies, tormented by our own insatiable selfishness. And yet this very selfishness is, at one and the same time, a proof of our right to life and of our subjective poverty. Where and how can we find peace, integration, balance, the fullness of our personality? The answer is at hand. Our inner peace is to be found in love. Thus the further question arises: which love? We will not answer this question immediately. We will say only that in order to be happy it is necessary to learn "the art of loving." It is an art in which nature herself will be our teacher if only we listen to her and interpret her according to the sovereign law of love as taught by Christ and apply it with all the detail and vigor which is implied by such a law; love God, love your neighbor.

If we were to learn really how to love as we ought would not our own personal and collective lives be transformed to peace and happiness? The Holy Year will also have to include in its program this fundamental aim: love, to restore love; real, pure, strong, Christian love.

The painful reality of war

And what are we to say about social reconciliation? O what a chapter that would be! At least a thousand pages! Let us say merely that reconciliation, that is, peace, becomes daily a more pressing need, an increasing need. Did not all of us hope that after the last World War a lasting peace would finally be achieved? Did not the whole world make truly gigantic efforts to give peace in the development of civilization? Thus peoples would feel secure and nations would practice brotherhood among themselves. The terrible and fearsome experience of recent years, however, makes us realize one dreadful fact: war is still possible, it is always possible. The production and sale of armaments shows us that it is even easier and more disastrous than ever. Even today we are experiencing a painful event of war, and it is not the only one. We feel humiliated and frightened. Is it possible that this is an incurable disease of humanity?

Here we should note the congenital disproportion in humanity between its capacity for setting ideals and its moral aptitude to remaining faithful to its programs for civil progress. One is tempted to say: It is impossible for the world to remain peaceful. Our reply is: no! Christ, our Peace (Eph. 2, 14) makes possible the impossible (Cfr. Luke 18, 27). If we follow his Gospel the union between justice and peace becomes a reality; not, of course, becoming crystalized and immobile but, on the contrary, in the context of a history that is in a state of continual development; this can be done! peace can be reborn!

At all levels

This, then, is our program for the Holy Year, reconciliation at all levels; family, community, national, ecclesial, ecumenical. And at the social level also! Is it not possible to conceive a human society which, although there may be diverse and contrasting differences, is based on an organic and just cooperation and therefore on human and Christian peace for all those who share in it? Is this no more than a dream? Is it mere folly? It is precisely on this point that our thinking is original. We believe that political eschatology, moral parousia, is a Christian duty, whatever may be the degree of its practical realization in the contingent circumstances of history. Love, justice, peace, are good and living ideals. They are the energy for social development and we must not exchange them for

hatred and violence as a means for achieving that real peace which is expressed in the wisdom and goodness of Christ's words: "you are all brothers" (Mt. 23, 8).

The primary task of the Holy Year

There we have another immense task for the Holy Year. Doubtless there will be a preference to be given to the third pacification, the religious peace-making which in fact comes first of all. By this we mean the reinstatement of each one of us, of the whole Church, and, God willing, of the world, in a state of relationship and grace with our heavenly Father. This is the first task of the Holy Year and must not be omitted; the re-establishment of peace between ourselves and God which we can only experience by meditating upon and living up to the incomparable word of reconciliation which was so dear to St. Paul. This, however, would be a lecture in itself and so, for the present, we shall be content to entrust it to your memory for the coming Holy Year: Reconciliation with God, (Cfr. II Cor. 5, 20).

With our Apostolic Blessing.

Reconciliation with God: Primary Aim of Holy Year

General audience, October 31, 1973

The great spiritual event called the Holy Year which has been announced to the world is beginning to assume enormous proportions. We feel obligated to offer a definition of it and yet we cannot do so in mere terms of the calendar. The significance which this religious and historical event must assume is both deep and complex. This is so not only because of the concept of repentance and indulgence derived from its centuries-old tradition but also owing to the fact that in the coming Holy Year we can see a living reflection of the doctrine enunciated by the recent Council. Moreover, through the multiple aspects of those two themes, renewal and reconciliation, we can try to make the immense treasury of the Council's teachings more accessible to both reflection and action. We are afraid of repeating ourself, but that cannot but stimulate the discovery of the ever new and fruitful themes deriving from the program proposed.

We have merely mentioned reconciliation, for example, reconciliation with our conscience, and with our neighbor; we have not yet considered the main aspect of this fundamental chapter, which is reconciliation with God. The Holy Year aims first and foremost at reconciling men with God, us believers in the first place, and then as many men as can be induced to this salvific and beatifying meeting.

It will do us good to recall a striking and synthetic text of St. Paul. "If any one is in Christ (that is, a real Christian), he is a new creation: the old has passed away, behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. So we (apostles) are ambassadors for Christ. God making his appeal through us. We beseech you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God" (II Cor. 5, 17-20).

The complete synthesis

In these words, which the Apostle repeats in other similar ones (cf. Rom. 5, 10), the whole conception of our moral life is understood, and the whole doctrinal synthesis of redemption and salvation is expressed.

That is, our human existence is born, lives, unfolds itself and wanes in an existential and moral relationship with God. Here is all the wisdom of life, here the philosophy of truth, here the theology of our destiny. We are born creatures of God; we are dependent on Him ontologically; and, whether we like it or not, we are answerable to Him. We are made in this way. Intelligence, will-power, freedom, heart, love and sorrow, time and work, human and social relations, life, in short, has a derivation determined in various ways, and has a purpose, also defined in various ways, in relation to God. Man cannot be adequately conceived without this essential reference to God. However mysterious and transcendent, and therefore ineffable, God the eternal principle of the universe may be, He looms over us, knows us, observes us, penetrates us, preserves us continually; He is the Father of our life. We can ignore Him, forget Him, refuse to recognize Him, deny Him and disown Him: He exists. He is alive, He is real. "In him we live and move and have our being," as St. Paul affirms at the Areopagus in Athens (Acts 17, 28).

Strong opposition

This "Weltanschauung," this conception of the world, is certainly strongly opposed today. People do not want to admit the existence of God, they prefer to outrage their own reason with the absurd aphorism of the "death of God," rather than train their minds to seek and experience divine light. Atheism seems to be triumphant. Religion has no longer any reason for existing? Sin does not exist? . . . Oh! we are saturated with these ideologies. But we are always convinced, by the grace of God, that God exists, like the sun; and that everything comes to us from Him and goes from us to Him. And you who are listening to us, wise and believing sons, you are certainly equally persuaded, with us, of this.

We understand then how urgent, modern and strategic the advent of this Holy Year is. It must confirm for us, within and without, the sovereign existence of God, and the economy of God, that is

the plan—a plan of infinite Love—established by Him, to make us attentive disciples, faithful servants, but above all, happy sons. We all feel, some in one way, others in another, that our correspondence with this plan, with this plan of natural and supernatural relations, has been, and still is, imperfect. Perhaps it has been hostile and faithless. We feel we are sinners.

Ungrateful sons

Here another immense page, a dramatic, painful and humiliating one, that of our sin, opens up before us. We have broken the dutiful and vital relations that sustained us in God. We have never equalled with the completeness of our response, with the totality of our love, the Love that God offers us. We are ungrateful, we are debtors! In fact we would be lost if Christ had not come to save us. And so? So now there is the pressing necessity to become reconciled with God “reconciliamini Deo!”

And here is the amazing good fortune! Reconciliation is possible! This is the announcement that the Holy Year echoes in the world and in our conscience: it is possible! May this announcement reach the bottom of our hearts!

With our Apostolic Blessing.

Holy Year inspires personal renewal, heart searching

General audience, November 7, 1973

The themes proposed by the Holy Year program for an authentic implementation of Christianity, that is renewal and pacification, involve many moral and spiritual problems concerning the preparation of the acts and the activity that their sincere and effective observance seems to demand.

This coming Holy Year should be characterized by the seriousness of its celebration, both individual and collective: a seriousness all the more necessary, the more superficial the usual course of the common experience of our life today. The trend of the latter is that everything is easy, everything is momentary, everything is exterior. The psychology of the cinema. We are trying, on the contrary, to arrive at strong, constant, interior moments of the spirit. There is an extremely common word, which expresses very well this programmatic aspiration of ours; namely, we wish to reach the heart of the matter.

What then is the heart? Our question is posed in the religious and moral perspective, which is extended to the psychological and ideal one. What is the meaning of this term so much in use?

God sees the heart

We are tempted to adopt the definition of St. Augustine, which identifies the meaning of the word heart with the ego: “. . . cor meum, ubi ego sum quicumque sum” (Conf. X, 3; P.L. 32, 781). And we are confirmed in choosing this pregnant sense, indicative of the sentimental, intellectual and particularly the operative personality of man, by biblical language, which prescind from the purely physiological significance of this organ to indicate what is living, genetic, operating, moral, responsible and spiritual in man. The heart is the interior cell of human psychology; it is the source of man's instincts, thoughts, and above all, his actions. Of what is

good and what is bad, let us recall the words of Jesus the Master: "For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a man" (Mt. 15, 19-20).

What a sad introspection! And what makes it grave is the warning in the Bible that God sees clearly our heart, this secret hiding-place of our moral reality. "Man looks on the outward appearance," Holy Scripture says, "but the Lord looks on the heart" (1 Kings 16-7); he searches our mind (Jer. 17, 10).

We could bring forward many other striking quotations about the penetration of God's judging eye into the most secret recess of our hearts; but now we are anxious to observe how God's judgment is passed on this inner life of ours, thus thrown open. Christ has no time for hypocrisy, make-believe virtue, formal and lying justice. The Gospel is full of the Lord's expressions of intolerance for a pseudo-observance of religion, unconnected with the truth of the good and the sincerity of love. We should reread chapter XXIII of St. Matthew to feel again the force of Christ's invectives against the cunning factions of two social groups, the Pharisees and the Scribes of that time, in order to tremble about the fundamental necessity of a real relationship with God, sincerity of heart, expressed by consistency of thought, words and deeds. We must, therefore, go back to the study of that word which has now entered current use, "metanoia," which means interior conversion, the change of heart of which we have spoken on other occasions. We cannot pass over in silence our painful amazement at the indulgence, and more, the publicity and propaganda, so ignobly widespread today, for what upsets and defiles minds, with pornography, immoral shows and licentious exhibitions. Where is human "ecology"?

Need of courage

In order to celebrate the Holy Year well, action at the deepest and most jealously protected level of our moral psychology is necessary. We must be courageous and bold in our resolve to bring renewal and pacification to bear on the very core of our personal conscience.

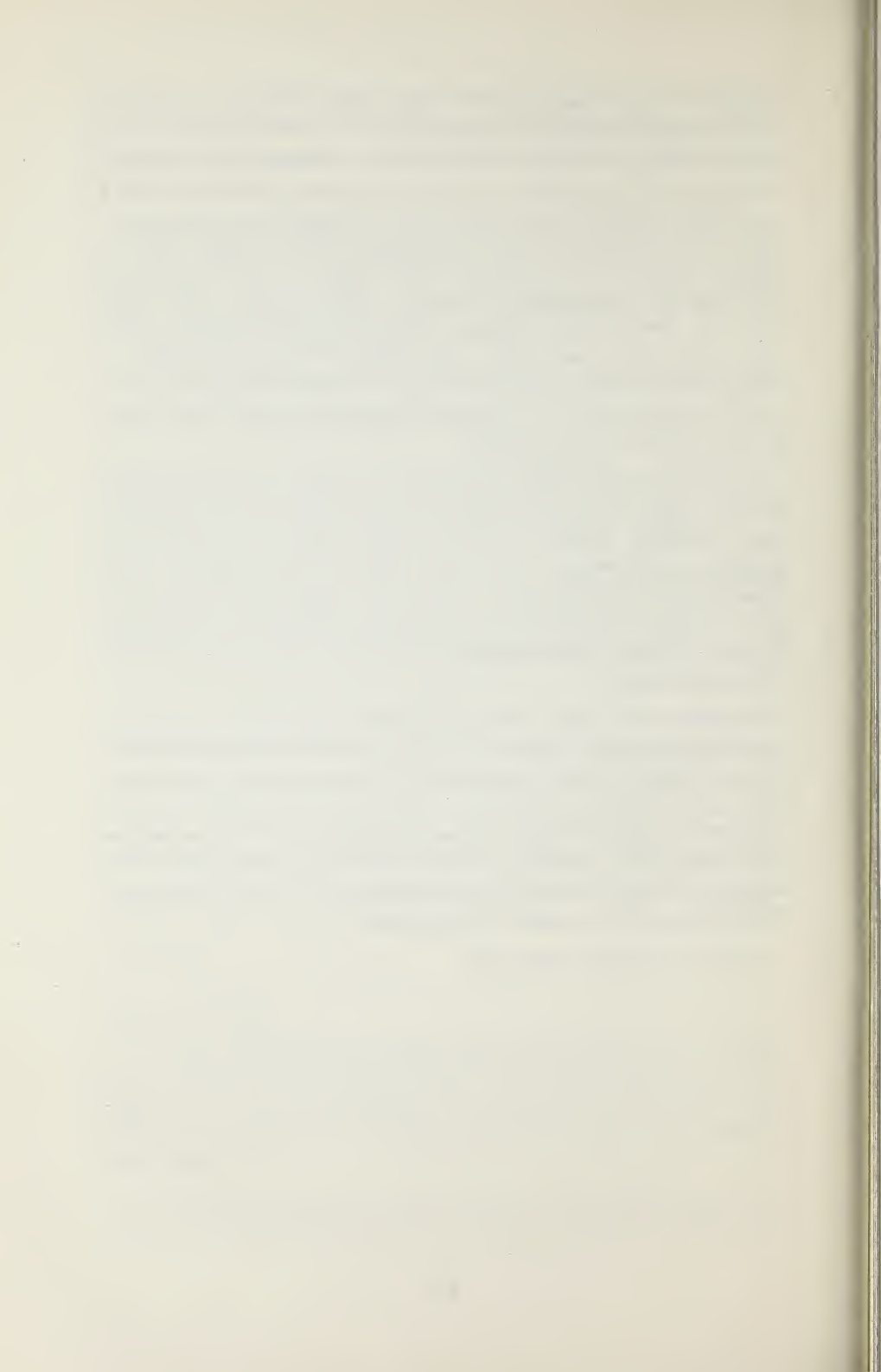
We are stimulated by two topical motives. One is the importance now given to psychoanalysis, this vivisection of the unconscious

process of our activity, that is, of our temperament, our morals, our peculiar personality (cf. L. Ancona, "La Psicoanalisi"). We esteem this now famous movement of anthropological studies, although we do not always find them consistent with one another, nor always confirmed by satisfactory and beneficial experiences, nor integrated by that science of hearts which we draw from the school of Catholic spirituality. This suffices for the moment to point out how reasonable and topical is the analysis of our souls, from the standpoint of theology, ethics and Christian ascetism, such as the Holy Year invites us to think of again and deepen. A new interest in the interior pedagogy of lived faith seems to demand our attention and to require the didactic skills of our teachers, both academic and spiritual.

Another reason is the supremacy assumed by personal conscience today over the external norm that governs our behavior at every moment. Here we should indeed defend conscience, not separating it, however, as we have said on other occasions, from defense of the guidance that conscience needs, and which it receives from law and authority, objectively justified in the exercise of their functions, not humiliating, but integrating the personality of conscious man.

This reference, too, to the prerogatives recognized or attributed to conscience today, can remind us how providential is the exercise in depth that the Holy Year proposes to us, precisely for the resolute and systematic exploration of our heart, that is, of our conscience, in order to renew and reconcile the new man, whom we are seeking, for ourselves, for the world surrounding us, for the kingdom of God, to which we are called (cf. the old, but classic "Combattimento spirituale" of Scupoli).

With our Apostolic Blessing.



The Holy Year, a Year of Prayer

by

Jesús Solano, S.J.

Prayer and the Holy Year

Prayer is composed of all those positive acts of religion which are knowingly and willingly referred to God, directly and explicitly. This seems to be a description of prayer which in no way betrays the meaning of prayer in the Holy Scriptures or diminishes its wealth and breadth in any way. (K. Rahner).

In other words, prayer means our conscious relationship with God in the religious field or the consciousness of our religious relationship with Him. The classic saying of the Fathers is even more simple: Prayer is a conversation with God. On January 27, 1973, Paul VI said: "Prayer expresses our relationship with God, our intimate relationship with the Father."

"This conscious contact with God" or this "rising up of the mind and heart to God" is the most spontaneous and elementary manifestation of the relationship between man and God. It is the soul of religion itself and is the general way of manifesting religion not only in the most developed religions, but in primitive worship as well.

The Holy Father, in the general audience on Wednesday, August 22, 1973 summarized the meaning of prayer in these words: "It is the breath of the mystical Body; it is a conversation with God; it is an expression of love (charity); it is an effort to reach out to the Father; it is an acknowledgment of His Providence; it is our appeal for mercy and for His aid where our forces fail. Prayer grows from a double root: religious sentiment (the natural root) and the grace of God (supernatural root). Prayer is the highest expression of the Church but at the same time it is its nourishment and its source. The Holy Year, as a religious event, should be animated by prayer. The degree of fervor in prayer will be the measure of the sincerity of religious renewal we bring to this event.

“When we propose a religious renewal”—the Pope said in the general audience mentioned above—“we naturally think of a revival in both individual and collective prayer.”

This subject is so vast that we must limit it in this article to the aspects which are characteristic of this particular Holy Year.

The insistence on making the Holy Year a year of prayer meets with an obstacle which requires special effort and good will to overcome. It is difficult, in these times of indifference to religion, for most people to pray spontaneously and joyfully.

Many of our contemporaries believe prayer to be useless as though there were no Divine Being to address. Some say that prayer is harmful to human self-sufficiency and to the personality of modern man. Others, without worrying about doctrine, live their lives with no thought of God.

We Christians live in this environment. It is therefore essential, in these times to lay great stress on prayer, whereas in other circumstances prayer would have been quite natural.

It is most urgent that we be aware of this reality and by our faith try to overcome this difficulty. Paul VI mentioned this “great difficulty, which impedes the religious renewal sought by the past Council and programmed for this coming Holy Year” (August 22nd).

The intensification of prayer in this Holy Year acquires an apostolic value as it becomes the witness of our Faith theoretical and practical in a world where God is put aside.

The thought that the need of God is co-natural to man, should be an encouragement to overcome the difficulty of the lack of practice of religion. In the present younger generation there seems to be a searching for collective mysticism which well might be a sincere seeking for God. Andrew Greeley writes this year: “A great number of theologians, I believe, have been in too much of a hurry to assert the existence of the man without religion. (There are in reality few sociological statistics to confirm their existence).” (*Concilium*, n. 81, January 1973.)

The heart of man

Prayer finds its source in the inner life, in the heart of man. This perhaps is the right place to quote the wise words of the emi-

ment scientist Albert Einstein: "The problem is not one of atomic energy but it lies in the conscience and heart of man."

This inner life has been heavily underlined by the Holy Father in relation to the Holy Year. When the Pope announced it, he said: "It is necessary to make quite clear the essential meaning of the Holy Year. It is a renewal of the inner man . . . man must be renewed in his inner life. It is a time of grace which cannot be acquired unless we bow our heads humbly in prayer." (May 9, 1973).

Just before Pentecost, when the local Churches began to learn of the spiritual movement for the Holy Year, the Pope spoke about how the Paraclete should act within the heart of man. He spoke of the heart as "the intimate—free—deep and personal center of our inner life. Within the heart thoughts are conceived—the fruit of prayer." (June 6, 1973).

At the beginning of this year 1973, in a letter for the centenary of St. Teresa of the Child Jesus, Pope Paul called our attention to the need of a life of intimacy with God, "a difficult but necessary aim" and added a serious warning: "The apostolate at all levels must have its origin in prayer. It must reach the heart of Christ otherwise it will become only activity with the name of evangelization." (January 2, 1973).

The Holy Spirit

Following the line he has taken during his Pontificate, the Pope declares: "One of the most absorbing and fruitful studies of the Holy Year, should be to complete the study of Christology and especially of Ecclesiology by a new cult to the Holy Spirit as an inevitable complement of the teaching of Vatican II." (June 6th).

The cult of the Holy Spirit should be the source of a new prayer life. Just as in the first era of the Church, perseverance in prayer followed the coming of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2, 42, 47) and was crowned by the fullness of that same Spirit (Acts 4, 31).

The Holy Spirit fills us in prayer with that confidence and that intimacy which is proper to the children of God: "Those who follow the leading of God's spirit are all God's sons" (Rom. 8, 14).

"To prove that you are sons, God sent out the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out in us, Abba, Father" (Rom. 8, 15; Gal. 4, 6).

“You are God’s temple and God’s spirit has his dwelling in you” (1 Cor. 3, 16).

The most decisive factor is that it is not we who pray but the Holy Spirit himself who prays in us: “Only, as before, the Spirit comes to the aid of our weakness; when we do not know what prayer to offer, to pray as we ought, the Spirit himself intercedes for us, with groans beyond all utterance: and God, who can read our hearts, knows well what the Spirit’s intent is: for indeed it is according to the mind of God that he makes intercession for the saints.” (Rom. 8, 26-27).

The Biblical formula “pray at all times in spirit” will become a new reality as we learn to understand the action of the Holy Spirit within us and we allow ourselves to be moved by this same Spirit. “So no one else can know God’s thoughts, but the Spirit of God. And what we have received is no spirit of wordly wisdom; it is the Spirit that comes from God, to make us understand God’s gifts to us; gifts which we make known, not in such words as human wisdom teaches, but in words taught us by the Spirit, matching what is spiritual with what is spiritual. Mere man with natural gifts cannot take in the thoughts of God’s Spirit; they seem mere folly to him, and he cannot grasp them because they demand a scrutiny which is spiritual. (1 Cor. 2, 12-14).

The life of the spirit will mean that those who belong to Christ have crucified their flesh, with all its passions, all its desires (Gal. 5, 34). In this way, the number will be increased of those who according to the expression of St. John of the Cross in his spiritual canticle, by the action of the Holy Spirit perceive the choicest virtues flourishing in their souls. The Holy Spirit must be allowed to work in his marvellous and mysterious way in us so that prayer be transformed into something heavenly quite beyond our own attainment.

The prayer of a priestly people

The personal aspect of renewal and of prayer in this Holy Year has been greatly stressed by the Holy Father, as we mentioned above in speaking of the heart of man.

The Pope did not hesitate to affirm that the aim of the Holy Year is not only of value in itself but is of primary consequence to

us here and now: the conversion of heart, the renewal of soul, first in each man individually, and then in all people collectively.

The union of all people in the Church needs no further stress in this post-conciliar time. Pope Paul has called our attention to love for the Church brought so much to the fore in these days, and again recalls how this love should lead us to the celebration of the Holy Year. (Sept. 12, 1973). He insisted, shortly before this, when speaking of the Year of Reconciliation that the Church "is one only, full and perfect" that which was founded by Christ on Peter and the Apostles (August 29, 1973).

The Vatican Council gives the Church the title of the "People of God." This title summarizes Catholic ecclesiology according to the Divine-human relationship within the Church and according to the pattern of history in the course of centuries, before Christ, during his life and after it.

It is also an expression of modern thought on present social facts. (Sept. 5, 1973).

In this same meditation the Pope spoke of the Church as: "the People of God." "You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a consecrated nation, a people God means to have for Himself." (1 Pet. 2, 9).

The fundamental character of Vatican II refers to the People of God as "a royal race of priests for God" partaking of the priesthood of Christ. We must say that nowadays this office of priesthood is especially felt by Christians in the world.

Our prayer during the Holy Year should be a priestly prayer, following the line of spirituality given us by Vatican II. The whole life of Christians should be priestly as described in the Document "Lumen Gentium": "For all their works, prayers, and apostolic endeavors, their ordinary married and family life, their daily labor, their mental and physical relaxation, if carried out in the Spirit, and even the hardships of life, if patiently borne—all of these become spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (cf. 1 Pet. 2:5). During the celebration of the Eucharist, these sacrifices are most lovingly offered to the Father along with the Lord's Body. Thus, as worshippers whose every deed is holy, the laity consecrates the world itself to God." (LG 34).

Pope Paul's recent decalogue on conversation with God in its communitary and priestly aspect is most timely. It contains also points which deal with personal prayer.

The great themes of prayer

Our modest task is simply to touch on some aspects of prayer which are specific to this Holy Year, so that they may become subject matter of our conversation with God in this period.

Prayer on this earth enables us to partake of the heavenly liturgy "together with all the choirs of angels we sing a hymn of glory to God" (SC 8) and so we nourish our souls by true *adoration*. (PO 18; cf. LG 28, 41, 51). Jesus himself announced "but the time is coming, nay, has already come, when true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth" (Jn. 4, 23).

The discovery of the marvels of nature and the recent interplanetary space travel reawakens in us the sense of adoration. Here we can apply what Sir Bernard Lovell said in 1970 about the recent astronomical discoveries: "Such knowledge makes us hold our breath." The latest interplanetary travels are only a feeble intimation of the immensity of the universe.

Many believe that the words of St. Paul are now coming to pass before the eyes of this generation: "Make no mistake about it; you cannot cheat God. A man will reap what he sows . . ." (Gal. 6, 7).

The Pope calls our attention to the problem of moral decadence (Sept. 19, 1973). With the Apostle, we can only accept the mysterious plan of Salvation and repeat: "How deep is the mind of God's wisdom, of His knowledge; to Him be glory throughout all ages. Amen. (Rom. 11, 33, 36).

For a Christian conversation with God must be an expression of *inexhaustible love*. By deepening our knowledge of the Holy Spirit during this Holy Year, we shall learn to live by love. Our Lord "sent the Holy Spirit upon all men that He might inspire them from within to love God with their whole heart and their whole soul, with all their mind and all their strength" (LG 40). Following the teaching of the word of God, St. Augustin calls the Holy Spirit "the God of love" (*De Trinitate* 15, 17, 31).

The third centenary of the apparitions of the Sacred Heart to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque (1673-1675) is another incitement to a loving relationship with God.

Vatican Council II is a gift, amongst many others, for which we must thank God untiringly. The Pope declares that this Council has given "a new psychology to the Church and to the world" (November 18, 1965). "Vatican II has left an inestimable mark on our times" said the Holy Father (April 23, 1969).

Following the teaching of Our Lord—" . . . and forgive us our trespasses . . ." (Mt. 12)—the *forgiveness* of sins is one of the frequent themes of Christian prayer. Nowadays we share more acutely in "the sin of the world" (Jn. 1, 29) and "the truth is that the imbalances under which the modern world labors are linked with that more basic imbalance rooted in the heart of man" (GS 10).

Lastly, *petition* is characteristic of prayer. New personal, social and universal needs urge us in this age "to wrestle" in prayer with God as St. Paul expresses it (Rom. 15, 30).

At the meeting of the Central Committee for the Holy Year there appeared immediately some pastoral problems concerning which initiatives should be undertaken both at the national and international level. These problems are listed here so that they may become intentions for prayer during this Holy Year: Faith and the practice of religion in the world of work and in the world of youth; in the cultural world; in the development of society and trade; in the world of social communications, entertainment and leisure.

Two other problems are priestly and religious vocations in the new community life of the Church and the reawakening of the missionary mandate of the whole Church.

Prayer, a condition and fruit of the Holy Year

St. Thomas Aquinas exposed some errors of former times which unfortunately are still to be lamented today.

He explained that prayer does not mean making our needs known to God as though He was ignorant of them, but it makes us aware of the need we have of divine help. Neither do we pray that God might change his decisions, but we pray that His Divine Will

may be done with the help obtained by prayer. In other words, prayer becomes a part of the Divine Plan of Salvation (S. Tho. 22 q. 83 a.).

Our desires for the Holy Year are nothing more nor less than the renewal and reconciliation of man according to the teaching of Vatican II. From whom can we expect this, if not from Him who gives us "every good and perfect gift"? (James 1, 17).

By witnessing God's power to those who do not believe, by renewing the heart and inner life in the faithful, by reviving the active and efficacious devotion to the Holy Spirit, by stressing the universal sharing in the priesthood of Christ, the Holy Year will give new vigor and growth of prayer.

This period of time is called "holy" because it is a time of a particular bond of love between God and man. God is holy and sanctifies or consecrates all those who are united to Him. To pray means to be aware of our relationship with God. We cannot live the Holy Year as faithful and responsible people, unless we live in prayer and by prayer.

The attitude of Our Lady together with the Apostles while awaiting the Holy Spirit will be our example of prayer in this Holy Year. The Apostles were "all with one mind, and gave themselves up to prayer, together with Mary the Mother of Jesus, and the rest of the women and his brethren." "While they were all gathered together in unity of purpose . . . they were all filled with the Holy Spirit." (Acts 1, 14; 2, 1, 4).

The Pope has shown his trust in devotion to Our Lady: "If we wish this Holy Year to attain its end of renewal, we must rely on the aid of the Blessed Virgin" therefore, "we must trustingly ask Our Lady for her help." (May 30, 1973).

Decree of the Sacred Apostolic Penitentiary on the Indulgences of the Holy Year

September 24, 1973

The Cardinal President of the Central Committee for the celebration of the Holy Year has asked this Sacred Apostolic Penitentiary to determine the requirements for gaining the "gift of the Indulgence" which the Holy Father promised in order to strengthen the spirit of reconciliation and renewal proper to this Holy Year.

At the direction of His Holiness the Sacred Penitentiary makes the following provisions: namely that from the first Sunday of Advent of the present year until the day on which the Holy Year is solemnly inaugurated here in Rome, the faithful of the various local Churches may gain:

1) A Plenary Indulgence, at times to be determined by the Episcopal Conferences, if they make a pilgrimage to the Cathedral Church, or to other churches designated by the local Ordinary, where a solemn community celebration is to take place;

2) A Plenary Indulgence, also at times to be determined by the Episcopal Conferences, if they make group pilgrimages (e.g. families, schoolchildren, professional associations, members of pious sodalities) to the Cathedral Church, or to other churches designated by the local Ordinary, and there spend some time in devout recollection, concluding with the recitation or singing of the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed, together with a prayer to Our Blessed Lady;

3) A Plenary Indulgence if, being unable to take part because of illness or other serious reason, they join spiritually with those making the pilgrimage, and offer their prayers and sufferings to God.

With regard to the Diocese of Rome, which appropriately should serve as an example and encouragement to the other ecclesial com-

munities in this matter, the Sacred Penitentiary decrees that the times and manner of gaining the above-mentioned Plenary Indulgence are to be determined by the Cardinal Vicar of the City.

Anything to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given at Rome, from the Sacred Apostolic Penitentiary, on the 24th day of September 1973.

J. Card. PAUPINI
Major Penitentiary
J. SESSOLO
Regent

Accompanying Letter of the Secretary General of the Central Committee to the Presidents of the Episcopal Conferences

In the name of Cardinal de Fürstenberg, the President of the Central Committee, I am sending a photocopy of the Decree of the Sacred Penitentiary relative to the Jubilee Indulgence which may be gained during the celebration of the Holy Year in the local Churches. I am enclosing as well an official translation of the text in the vernacular.

The Presidents of the Episcopal Conferences will determine the manner in which the document will best be made public, whether, for example, through a press conference (after October 25th) or through communication by the local Ordinaries. In any case, it would appear opportune that the Ordinaries, beyond the simple announcement of the Decree, should explain to the people the sense and the intent of the text. Of particular interest would be the apt expressions chosen by the Penitentiary when speaking of the "donum indulgentiae" which the Holy Father has promised "ad spiritum confirmandum reconciliationis et renovationis, quae huius Anni Sacri sunt propriae".

That which is of primary importance for the Holy Year, both on the level of theology and on the level of consequent pastoral initiatives which are made available to the people, is the spirit of reconciliation and interior renewal. Toward that spirit must be directed all practices of piety, penance, and charity. This would include, of course, that most significant Jubilee demonstration of piety, the Pilgrimage itself.

As a sign of his response to and whole-hearted confirmation of these exterior manifestations of interior conversion and the will to persevere in charity, the Holy Father grants the "gift of the Indulgence".

As Cardinal de Fürstenberg has pointed out in a previous letter,

there is a definite hierarchy of values which must be remembered in explaining the Holy Year and in planning its programs so that that which is of fundamental importance is ever kept in mind and becomes the goal of all efforts.

I should like to ask that, in applying the present Decree, a certain uniformity of initiative might be found. This does not gainsay, of course, the liberty of action granted by the Holy Father to the Episcopal Conferences (cf. Pont. Letter on the Holy Year addressed to the Cardinal President) nor does it ignore the diversity of situations and mentalities found in the Church. It is merely a reminder that a certain common thrust should characterize all efforts in order that the ecclesial dimensions and objectives of the Holy Year might be realized.

Expressing again my pleasure in being able to send you an official document which will prove helpful to all Conferences and National Committees in their work for the Holy Year, I remain

Sincerely in Christ,
✠ ANTONIO MAZZA
The Most Reverend ANTONIO MAZZA
Secretary General

HOLY YEAR—1975

..... **ORDER FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE HOLY YEAR IN THE LOCAL CHURCHES.** Central Commission for the Celebration of the Holy Year. Sections include: Path to Salvation-Advent, Christmas, Sundays in Ordinary Time, Lent and Easter; Week of Reconciliation; Mass for the Holy Year; Prayers for the Pope; Prayers for the Holy Year, public, private; Readings for Masses and Other Celebrations; Litany of the Saints. ICEL translation. (V-297) \$2.50

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