

Melbourne, 2 February 1982

Keep Going Forward

Dearest all,

Today I send you a greeting from Australia.

Our Holy Journey continues, and we cannot pause, much less start going backwards. Jesus said: "Whoever puts his hand to the plough but keeps looking back is unfit for the reign of God" (Lk. 9:62). Here in Australia, the coat of arms of this young country reminds us of this, because it depicts two animals, chosen precisely because they can't walk backwards: the kangaroo – the famous kangaroo! - and the emu, an Australian bird.

We, too, must keep going forward courageously. And to guide us on our way we have the Word of Life, which is "A lamp to my feet ... a light to my path" (Ps. 119:105). This month's Word of Life is: "To the weak I became a weak person with a view to winning the weak. I have made myself all things to all men in order to save at least some of them" (1 Cor. 9:22). We should have a special love for this Word of Life because it reminds us of how we must act if we want to follow the way of unity and contribute to the fulfilment of Jesus' prayer, "That all may be one" (Jn. 17:21). We must "make ourselves one" with every neighbour. We know this is the way, because it is the way chosen by God himself to show us his love. He became a human being like ourselves and let himself be crucified and forsaken, to put himself at everyone's level. He really made himself weak with the weak! And thus he opened the way so that all may be one. He bent down to our level; but he did not break. Just like the bamboo, that is used for so many things in the Philippines, because it bends without breaking.

We are called to contribute to the fulfilment of Jesus' prayer for unity. So first of all, let's renew our faith that every human being is called to unity, since God loves everyone. And let's not try to find excuses, such as: "That person will never understand!" "That one's too young to understand"; "That's one of my relatives. I know him only too well! He's too attached to the things of this world"; "That person's superstitious and believes in spiritism"; "That one belongs to another religion"; "That one's too old to change." Enough of these judgements! God loves everyone, and is there waiting for them. The only thing we have to do is love each and every person, by serving them and, by making ourselves completely one with them in everything but sin. Let Jesus worry about winning them over! And he will; if not now, in ten, or twenty, or thirty years. But he will! I know from experience.

In conclusion, let's take a closer look at all our relationships in these days, and work at making ourselves one with each person. In this way we will be ensuring that our efforts for unity will be effective.

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(See *Journey, Spiritual Insights*, New City Press, New York 1984, pp.39-40)