



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

Media Release

Personal witness to Christ is our calling, says new Nuncio

Personal witness to the message of Jesus was the strength of Pope John Paul II, and remained the calling of all in the Church, Australia's new Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Ambrose De Paoli said today.

In his first opening address to an Australian Catholic Bishops Conference plenary session, Archbishop De Paoli said he was grateful and honoured to have been appointed as Apostolic Nuncio of Australia by the late Pope.

"The Holy Father has placed his confidence in me and I hope that I will be able to respond, in some measure, to the expectations of all," he said.

"My concern is to witness to the message of Jesus, as is yours."

Archbishop De Paoli told the bishops he hoped they would find in him a friend, a helper and a collaborator.

"I have come with an open mind to know you, the Church which you serve, the peoples and nation to whom you witness," he said.

The Nuncio said that in recent weeks the world had witnessed and participated in memorable events which had embraced not only the Church, but the world itself.

"The late Pope John Paul II had a special gift of humanity which pushed aside barriers or pushed through barriers and reached out to others with a message, as diverse as it may be which struck some responsive chord," he said.

"In his own way he showed that he cared for others, regardless of differences and obstacles which history may have strewn along the way.

"He himself was a message, but of the Message of Jesus. We are all called to be just that."

Archbishop De Paoli said personal witness opened doors or kept them closed to the core message the Church sought to deliver.

"We are grateful to the 'Lord from whom all good things come' for the gift of Pope John Paul II," he said.

"Through the Cardinal Electors the Church and the world has a new successor of Peter, Pope Benedict XVI. To Him we pledge our loyalty and collaboration and promise of prayers as he begins his Pontificate in these changing and challenging times."

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