



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER
POPE JOHN PAUL II
TO THE ACROSS TRUST
ON ITS TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY**

29 October 1998

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

“With the affection of Christ Jesus” (*Phil* 1:8), I welcome you to the Vatican as The Across Trust celebrates its twenty-fifth anniversary, and I join you in giving thanks to God for the many gifts which these years have brought to so many people.

The work of groups like The Across Trust bears witness to the truth that the sick and the suffering are at the very heart of the Gospel. We preach Christ crucified (*1 Cor* 1:23) – which means that we preach a strength which comes precisely through weakness (cf. *2 Cor* 12:10). When the ill and infirm are united with Christ, God’s strength enters their lives and, through their very weakness, it touches the world. All of you – the sick and those who care for them – have a particular share in the mystery of the Lord’s Cross, “the Gospel of suffering” (*Salvifici Doloris*, VI).

Human suffering in fact can show forth the goodness of God: the wound can become a fountain of life (cf. *Jn* 19:34). The experience of suffering discourages and depresses many people, but in the lives of others it can create a new depth of humanity: it can bring new strength and new insight. The path to understanding this mystery is our faith. When faith turns to prayerful contemplation, it reveals to us all the power of the Lord’s Easter victory: “death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor tears nor pain” (*Rev* 21:4).

I pray that the Risen Christ will be with you all, to sow in your hearts the joy which comes to those who know that “nothing can separate them from the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord” (cf. *Rom* 8:39). May the Virgin Mary, Mother of Sorrows and Mother of all our joys, guard

you with a special love. As a pledge of divine strength and peace I gladly impart my Apostolic Blessing.

© Copyright 1998 - Libreria Editrice Vaticana

Copyright © Dicastero per la Comunicazione - Libreria Editrice Vaticana