A Time to Pray

A declaration of Bishop Javier Echevarria, Prelate of Opus Dei, on learning of the death of John Paul II.

04/02/2005

Today more than ever is a time to pray, closely united in Christ, our hearts full of gratitude to John Paul II. He spent himself day after day until his last breath in order to fulfill his mission as Father and Shepherd.

Today our filial gratitude is mixed with sorrow, profound and serene

sorrow. Throughout these nearly 27 years we learned to love John Paul II with our whole heart, which now is rent by his absence.

But we know, through faith, that John Paul II has crossed "the threshold of hope" to await us, with his habitual goodness and peace, in the heavenly home everyone longs for.

From faith, too, arises our supernatural serenity. We neither want to, nor can we, cancel our sorrow, but we live it serenely, convinced that God has done what is best for so faithful a servant of his Church.

This is also the moment to pray for the next Pope, for whom we Catholics are ready from this moment to give all of our filial affection. I ask God to grant him grace and assistance in assuming a task with so much responsibility.

As for myself, I confidently ask for the protection of John Paul II, a good and faithful servant of the Lord, and I also ask him to intercede before God for his successor.

+ Javier Echevarria

Prelate of Opus Dei

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