

Make us Witnesses of the Civilization of Love

Pope John Paul II

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Pope John Paul II began his Pastoral Visit to the Diocese of Arezzo-Cortona-Sansepolcro on May 23, 1993, by paying a brief visit to the shrine of St. Margaret of Cortona (1247-1297) who after her conversion became a Franciscan penitent and spent the rest of her life in acts of charity and in intense prayer and mortification. After pausing to pray before her remains, the Pope read a prayer which had been composed for the occasion.

Saint Margaret of Cortona,
Today I too come as a pilgrim to your shrine
And together with you I pause to pray
At the foot of that image of Christ crucified and risen
which you, a penitent, contemplated at length.

Lord, Jesus, who died on the cross for us,
in your self-immolation on Calvary for all humanity
you revealed the sources of immortal life.
May the mystery of your passion enlighten our existence,
making us ready to follow you on the paths of holiness and love.

Fan into flame our faith:
Teach us to recognize and accept
the hidden designs of your Providence in our daily life.

Give us the courage to confess our sins
and open our hearts to repentance
in order to obtain the gift of your mercy.
Move us to forgive our brothers and sisters,
following the example of your boundless charity.

Grant that through our concrete, generous service of the poor,
the sick and those who are marginalized and without hope
we may humbly be ready to repair whatever harm has been done.

Grant each person the joy of faithful perseverance
on the path of his own call, in total harmony with the Church.
To young people especially reveal the splendid path of love
which you want to achieve for them and with them
on the threshold of the new millennium.

Make us peacemakers, tenacious weavers
of daily relationships of fraternal solidarity,
agents of reconciliation,
witnesses and apostles of the civilization of love.

O glorious Saint Margaret,
present these petitions of ours to your and our crucified Lord.
Lead us by the power of your example,
support us with your constant protection,
accompany us, we pray you, to the Father's house.
Amen.