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The Home and the School of Communion

In the World Day of Prayer for the sanctification of priests, Pope John Paul II reiterated that the great challenge of the new millennium is “to make the Church the home and the school of communion.”

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During the solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Pope received participants in a congress sponsored

by the National Italian Confederacy of the Apostolic Union of Clergy and representatives of the new Apostolic Union of Laypersons.

After mentioning the theme on which they were reflecting: “The way of Trinitarian Communion in the particular church: diocesan spirituality is a spirituality of communion,” the Holy Father said that “the mystery of the Trinitarian Communion is the archetype of ecclesial communion.”

John Paul II recalled that in the apostolic letter *Novo millennio ineunte* he had written that “to make the Church the home and the school of communion is the great challenge that faces us in the new millennium.”

This supposes, in the first place, “promoting a spirituality of communion,” which requires, he added, “a radical conversion to Christ, a docile opening to the action

of his Holy Spirit and a sincere reception of our brothers.”

“The World Day of Prayer for the sanctification of priests, which by a happy coincidence is celebrated today,” he said, “is a favorable occasion to implore of our Lord the gift of holy ministers for his Church.”

The Pope emphasized that “to carry out this ideal of holiness all priests should follow the example of the divine Teacher.... A saint of our times, **Josemaría Escrivá**, writes that ‘the Lord uses us as torches, to make that light shine out. Much depends on us; if we respond many people will remain in darkness no longer, but will walk instead along paths that lead to eternal life.’” The Pope then added, “Where do we light these torches of light and of sanctity if not in Jesus’ heart, inexhaustible font of love?”

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