

**To Our Venerable Brother
John Baptist SRE Cardinal Brady
Metropolitan Archbishop, Armagh**

On the feast of the Chair of St Peter Apostle, which according to the most ancient witness, is celebrated on twenty second day of February, it will be in order to recall he pleasant memory of that day long ago when, with friends and relations around you, you were raised to the priestly order and thus made a dispenser of the supernatural gifts. This long time ministry, Venerable Brother of Ours, is for us and the Universal Church a reason for warmly congratulating you on your entire apostolic curriculum, sincerely undertaken and carried out during these fifty years for the good of the Church.

First the community of Kilmore and then the Maynooth Seminary formed you in sound doctrine, and then the Pontifical Lateran University in this eternal city instructed you fruitfully in the theological discipline. The way then lay wide open for engaging your energy as you thereafter turned to the care of pupils in the Seminary and the formation of students in the Pontifical Irish College. Also one should not remain silent about the spiritual benefit you brought to the parish of Ballyhaise.

It is not surprising then that blessed John Paul II, Our Predecessor, found you reading and willing when he appointed you Coadjutor of the See of Armagh, which a short time later you accepted to govern as Ordinary. As a pinnacle on these offices our predecessor Benedict XVI happily appointed you to the College of Cardinals.

One should not pass over what you are accustomed to carry out for the Episcopal Conference of Ireland as President and as a member of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity. To sum up, you consistently sought 'to know Christ Jesus' who for our salvation opened the impeded and closed way to heaven, dispensing to all people the benefits of divine grace.

There is no need for many words for us to express fraternal esteem for you which we wish to confirm most strongly as this noble commemoration of your priesthood is being celebrated. Thus we ourselves, by name, Venerable Brother of Ours, joyfully, offer to you our Apostolic Blessing, happily extended to the Coadjutor Archbishop, and abundantly to all the faithful and to all those bound to you by the bond of friendship / relationship, at the same time begging your prayers for the effective execution of Our Petrine Office.

From the Vatican Residence, 18th day of January in the year 2014, first year of our Pontificate.

Francis.