

HOMAGE OF THE FACULTY OF THEOLOGY K.U.LEUVEN

It is for me as dean of the Faculty of Theology of the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven a great joy to be invited by the editors of this *Festschrift* to join all those who honor Professor Dr. Jan van Bavel, O.S.A.

From 1969 to 1988 Father van Bavel has been teaching courses in Patrology, Sacramentology and Christology in both the Dutch and the English programs of our Faculty. He was, moreover, the director or corrector of a great number of doctoral dissertations. During these years he has published many books and articles, some of them translated into more than one language; they witness to his solid theological research as well as his pastoral concern. Van Bavel was, and still is, a well-known, often invited speaker for differing audiences in this country and abroad. In particular he has gained wide recognition for his studies on Saint Augustine; he also has made this difficult Church Father accessible to a wider public.

For the members of the staff Jan van Bavel has been a good colleague. By nature rather shy, he is very much loved because of his simplicity, honesty and willingness to help. In him we have always met the understanding, open-minded theologian. We could not but be aware of a kind of quiet spiritual maturity in him, brought about by various human factors, of course, but also by fidelity to his vocation and enhanced through the endurance of long illness and suffering.

Generations of students have considered him as one of their best professors, if not the best. In him they have greatly appreciated the harmony between scientific seriousness and religious authenticity. In a really talented way, Prof. van Bavel has brought together tradition and actuality. Through lucid insight and synthetic competence, combined with a remarkable command of language, his classes and writings excel in refreshing originality.

The Faculty of Theology of our University — staff and students alike — will miss such a person: teacher and colleague, master and friend. May the example of Jan van Bavel inspire us all! We wish him the time and the strength to fully dedicate himself to more publishing and continual apostolic endeavor.

Dean Jan LAMBRECHT