



The Holy See

***DISCORSO DI GIOVANNI PAOLO II
AD UN GRUPPO DI MINISTRI DELLA SANITÀ
DEI PAESI DEL CENTRO AMERICA E DEL PANAMA****

Martedì, 27 novembre 1984

Mr. Ministers,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is truly a pleasure for me to meet with those responsible for the Ministries of Health from the Central American isthmus who, accompanied by high-ranking functionaries of their governments and by leaders of the World Health organization and the Panamerican Organization, are making a visit to various European countries to present the Basic Priority Health Plan of Central America and Panama. I extend my cordial greeting to you and to all the distinguished persons accompanying you.

I am pleased by the fact that the highest government authorities in the field of health in Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama - all countries which I had the pleasure to visit last year - are making this combined effort to confront, in a more adequate and global way, the grave problems relative to the health conditions of their beloved countries.

I want to assure you that the Church shares your concerns to serve man, to raise the quality of life. to eliminate, or reduce - as far as possible - the conditions which cause death and disease in certain sectors of the population.

For this reason, I want to encourage you in your humanitarian and praiseworthy commitment to improve the level of health in Central America and Panama, as one of the primary services due to the dignity of persons, and always respecting the ethical norms which govern such an important and delicate field of human activity.

This is a field which the Church values highly and in which it never ceases to proclaim the moral principles which encourage the defence safeguarding and promotion of life its quality, and complete respect for the individual in his spiritual, psychological and physical aspects (cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, no. 14. par. 1), since every human being is not only the maximum expression of life on earth, but also a reflection of God. For its part, the Church collaborates gladly in many institutions dealing with health.

Aware of the many and pressing needs existing in the Central American region - just as in many other countries of the world - I express my sincere wish that the international community may be sensitive to your objectives. And may God grant that the improvement in the health conditions of the inhabitants of your countries be at the same time a bond and instrument in favour of peace, solidarity and understanding among the countries of Central America and Panama.

Thanking you for this visit and hoping for the greatest success for the health plan in Central America and Panama, I invoke the blessings of the Lord and author of life upon each of you, your collaborators and families.

**L'Osservatore Romano. Weekly Edition in English 1985 n.2 p.11.*

© Copyright 1984 - Libreria Editrice Vaticana

Copyright © Dicastero per la Comunicazione - Libreria Editrice Vaticana