



The Holy See

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to welcome the Officers and Men of HMAS Oxley on your visit to the Mediterranean for the seventy-fifth anniversary of the landing of Australian and New Zealand forces at Gallipoli. On this occasion I join you in commending to Almighty God the brave men who lost their lives in military action on the shores of Turkey.

Honouring their memory calls to mind the tragedy of the First World War and the massive death and destruction that it brought to much of the world. Unfortunately the events of those years were only the beginning of a century which saw even more suffering and bloodshed as a result of war, oppression and persecution. As the century comes to a close, I know that you and your countrymen, together with all people of good will, join me in working and praying for peace. This is the greatest tribute that can be paid to those who died seventy-five years ago in the belief that they were defending their country and their loved ones.

Today I invite each of you to make a personal contribution to world peace by doing your part to promote respect and esteem for all people, especially the poor and downtrodden, and by supporting cooperation and dialogue in order to avoid conflict. In this way you will bear witness to the very best of Australian traditions and values for which the men at Gallipoli gave their lives. My prayers accompany you on your long voyage home. May God bless you and your loved ones with his gifts of joy and peace.

© Copyright 1990 - Libreria Editrice Vaticana