



The Holy See

***DISCURSO DEL SANTO PADRE JUAN PABLO II
AL SEÑOR GUILLERMO JIMÉNEZ MORALES,
NUEVO EMBAJADOR DE MÉXICO ANTE LA SANTA SEDE****

Jueves 6 de abril de 1995

Mr. Ambassador,

1. I receive you today with great pleasure on this solemn occasion of the presentation of the Letters accrediting you as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United Mexican States to the Holy See. As I offer you my cordial welcome, I am pleased to repeat to you in person the deep affection I feel for all the children of that noble nation. In fact, through Divine Providence I was able to make the very first of my Pastoral Visits outside Italy to Mexico, in 1979. Subsequently, in 1990 I was able to return to the land of Mexico and again in August 1993, on my way back from Denver, I visited the beautiful Yucatan Peninsula, where I met the representatives of various indigenous peoples of the American continent and stressed the cultural and religious values of these ethnic minorities. I still have vivid memories of all those unforgettable days of faith and hope, when I could appreciate the genuine expressions of the Mexican soul.

With sincere gratitude I return the deferential greeting of your President, Mr. Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de Leon which you have conveyed to me and I ask you to express to him my best wishes for peace and well-being, together with the assurance of my prayers to the Most High that he may help him in his important mission, which he began only a few months ago, at the service of all Mexicans.

2. Mr. Ambassador, you kindly referred to the Holy See's work on behalf of man, of peace and solidarity between peoples and nations. In this task I am pleased to observe the concurrence between this Apostolic See and Mexico, in promoting the integral advancement of the human being. Indeed, it is the great human cause that the Holy See seeks to defend in the international forums where it is present. For this reason it trusts in the valuable contribution which your country,

faithful as on other occasions to its religious and cultural heritage, can make to defending basic values such as human life, the rights and dignity of each individual, the family and solidarity.

In order to contribute to the promotion and defence of the human being in continuity with the Christian tradition, I recently published the Encyclical Letter *Evangelium vitae*, to proclaim the reassuring news of the value and dignity attached to the life of every human being and stressing the lights and shadows of the current situation. In this regard I launched an appeal that in the present situation democracies may not be merely the formal expression of a majority, but may be qualified by a moral content that calls for the respect of all, especially the weakest and the most vulnerable.

3. The important changes in international political life during the closing years- of this century demand that all are constantly committed to assuring peace and harmony between peoples. In this sense, Mexico's specific geographical position offers vast horizons for a cultural and economic exchange which, while preserving its cultural identity and just national interests, must strive through constantly more fruitful collaboration with other nations of the American continent, to improve the standard of living of all, eliminating such scourges as poverty, underdevelopment, unemployment, crime, and the drug trade.

For its part, the Holy See must support all efforts directed at reinforcing social and economic structures that open up new ways of progress and development for peoples. Fostering unity and good understanding is a task in which it is necessary to collaborate generously to strengthen the bonds of solidarity, particularly between the members of the large Latin American family. I hope fervently that Mexico, faithful to its most noble traditions and Christian roots, may promote fraternity and understanding and thus contribute to increasing the bonds of friendship, peace, justice and progress between peoples who, historically are brothers and sisters with the same Catholic roots, language and culture.

4. The Mexican people is committed to the promotion of a society in which each person may feel respected, valued and called to work for the common good. In this regard, I would like to express to you my appreciation for the effort that, despite the difficulties, is being undertaken in the political, social and cultural sectors to encourage an increasingly democratic society through dialogue and joint commitment, where persons and groups may find room to express themselves, collaborate and contribute to the good of the nation.

The present delicate period the country is going through at the economic level is causing considerable problems. I truly hope that the authorities and those responsible in this sector may succeed in guaranteeing satisfactory economic stability and thus make possible an effective improvement in the living standard of the whole Mexican people, without forgetting the basic values that assure authentic social well-being.

5. The normalization of diplomatic relations between Mexico and the Holy See serves to foster the process of open and constructive dialogue which has been developing in recent years between the Catholic Church and the State. It is to be hoped that an atmosphere of loyal collaboration and understanding may be maintained between both, which will greatly benefit the social and spiritual advancement of all the beloved children of your noble country. For her part, the Church fulfills her mission in her own sphere, contributing all she can to the common good by enlightening it with spiritual and moral principles. Preaching the word of God and through her social teaching, she is prepared to continue to collaborate in her own field, with the different public institutions, so that your nation's citizens may find adequate responses to the challenges of the present time.

The Church neither seeks nor demands privileges, but she asks for recognition of the necessary conditions that are hers by natural right in order to fulfil her mission and which will allow individuals and peoples to exercise their inalienable right to freedom, especially of religion, and to seek the truth according to the dictates of their conscience.

Mr. Ambassador, before ending this meeting, I would like to assure you of my respect and support, together with my best wishes that the important mission which has been entrusted to you may be fruitful for the good of your country. I ask you to convey these sentiments and hopes to the President of the Republic and the other distinguished authorities. Through the intercession of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of Mexico, I pray that the Almighty may always sustain with his gifts you and your family, your co-workers and leaders, as well as the beloved Mexican people, always so dear to the Pope's heart.

**L'Osservatore Romano. Weekly edition in English n.16 p.4.*

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