



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO H.E. Mr EDWARD FENECH ADAMI
PRESIDENT OF MALTA***

Friday, 25 June 2004

Mr President,

I am pleased to welcome you to the Vatican so early in your term of office, and through you I send heartfelt greetings to the people of Malta. Your visit today occurs at an important moment in the history of your country. As Malta takes its rightful place in the European Union, it has a vital role to play in upholding the profoundly Christian identity of this Continent. In this regard I would like to express the Holy See's sincere appreciation for the support given by Your Excellency and the Government of Malta for the inclusion of a reference to Europe's Christian heritage in the Preamble of the Constitutional Treaty of the European Union.

Since the time of Saint Paul, Malta has been renowned for its firm adherence to the faith. I pray that it will persevere in this and I am confident that the Maltese people, well known for their dedication to the Church and, in particular, their great respect for family life, will draw others to a deeper appreciation of the liberating message of the Gospel. Upon you and all the beloved people of Malta I cordially invoke God's abundant blessings of prosperity, joy and peace.

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