



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO H.E. MR ANTON ROP
PRIME MINISTER OF SLOVENIA***

Friday, 28 May 2004

Mr Prime Minister,

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*1. I am pleased to offer my welcome to you and to the delegation that has accompanied you. Your visit today comes after the solemn act of the exchange of the Instruments of Ratification of the Accord between Slovenia and the Holy See on certain juridical topics of common concern. I thank you for your kind words and ask you to convey my respectful greeting to Mr Janez Drnovsek, President of the Republic.2. The Agreement that comes into force today testifies to the commitment of the Republic of Slovenia to maintain good relations with the Apostolic See. These relations are founded on mutual respect and loyal collaboration for the benefit of all the inhabitants of your Country, which has recently joined the European Union. I know that Slovenia desires to contribute to the common commitment to make Europe a true family of Peoples in a context of freedom and mutual cooperation, while at the same time safeguarding its own cultural and spiritual identity. Mr Prime Minister, I am convinced that Slovenia will be able to make this contribution effectively, because it can also refer to the Christian values that are an integral part of its history and culture. May it always remain faithful to these values!3. Once again I address my affectionate thoughts and the assurance of my constant remembrance in prayer to the beloved Slovenian People, whom I have twice visited with great joy. May God help them to make constant progress on their way towards development and peace. God bless dear Slovenia! With these sentiments, I willingly impart my Blessing to you and to your fellow citizens.

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