



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II UPON HIS ARRIVAL IN CASTEL GANDOLFO

15 July 1979 Beloved Brothers and Sisters! I am sincerely grateful to you all for this welcome, so spontaneous and joyful, which at once makes me feel "at home" in this town of yours, chosen by my recent Predecessors as their residence for the period of summer rest. I greet the Bishop of Albano, Mons. Gaetano Bonicelli, who, with a gesture of brotherly communion, has wished to bring me the testimony of his affectionate attachment and that of all the faithful in the diocese. I greet the parish priest and the whole parish community, of which I, too, will have the honour and the pleasure to feel I am a member for some time. And then my greeting goes to the civic family: to Mr Mayor and to all those who share with him responsibility for the administration of the town; and also to the tourists and holiday-makers, who have joined the local population to welcome me in this warm and agreeable way. I renew to everyone the expression of my gratitude, and call on you all to thank the Lord with me for the feast of greenery, flowers and fruits which he spreads around us with bountiful lavishness in this period. The period of the holidays offers so many persons the opportunity for a more direct contact with nature. It is important that each of us should become a careful observer of the marvels of creation, of its ever-new beauty, its inexhaustible fertility and its mysterious and inspiring depth. The rediscovery of these values, from the enchantment of which modern life too often keeps us away, brings forth in our hearts a feeling of joyful gratitude, which easily becomes a prayer: "Bless the Lord, O my soul; O Lord my God, thou art very great! Thou art clothed with honour and majesty, who coverest thyself with light as with a garment, who hast stretched out the heavens like a tent, who hast laid the beams of thy chambers on the waters, who makest the clouds thy chariot, who ridest on the wings of the wind..."; and so on, with what follows of that beautiful Psalm 104. I express to everyone the wish that the period of the holidays may be an opportunity not only for strengthening of the body, but also for revival of the spirit, and invoking on you and your dear ones the abundant gifts of beneficial divine goodness, I willingly bless you all.

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