



The Holy See

PASTORAL VISIT IN AUSTRALIA

FAREWELL CEREMONY

ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II

Perth (Australia), 1 December 1986

*Dear People of Australia, dear Friends,*1. This moment of farewell is linked with the joyful memory of my arrival in Canberra a week ago, and of so many wonderful events since then. For many months I had planned and looked forward earnestly to this Pastoral Visit. I was pleased that it would bring me to every State and Territory in Australia, and that it would give me an opportunity to meet Australians from many walks of life and widely differing backgrounds. And as I now prepare to depart, I want you to know how much this visit has meant to me. I have experienced the warmth and hospitality of the whole Australian nation. You have truly opened your hearts to me and received me as a friend and brother. The vastness of your country, with all its majestic features and natural beauty, is surpassed only by the hospitality and enthusiastic spirit of its people, from the Aborigines and Islander people whom I met in Alice Springs to your most recent immigrants, whom I seemed to encounter at nearly every stop along the way. In the youth and in the elderly, and in all the parents with their families, I have had the joy of discovering the secret of Australia's greatness, your most precious treasures.2. It was a special joy for me to be with my brothers and sisters of the Catholic faith. In all the places I visited, I had the privilege of joining the local Churches in celebrating the Eucharist, the source and summit of Christian life. As chief Pastor of the Catholic Church, I have the responsibility of confirming all the local Churches in their faith and of encouraging them to persevere in fidelity to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Not only has it been a great pleasure to fulfil this apostolic mission in Australia, it has also been truly inspiring. The Church in Australia, like Australia herself, is young and vigorous. She is eager to do great things for Christ and for all humanity.3. It is with profound gratitude that I say goodbye this morning I thank the Federal, State and civic authorities who have so generously assisted me, especially the Prime Minister who has honoured me by his presence and his words. Once again I thank the Catholic bishops, as well as your Government for inviting me to come. I am deeply grateful for all the arrangements that have made my stay among you possible. In particular I am grateful to all those concerned with the security arrangements of my visit. I thank those who provided for my transportation to the various venues and all the people of the communications media who helped give such widespread coverage to each event of the past week which will always remain for me an unforgettable encounter with Australia's soul. The beautiful ceremonies and the wonderful spirit of collaboration shown by everyone are special memories for me. And to all of you who have worked so hard and have received me with open arms, I express my lasting

thanks.4. I came to Australia to join my brothers and sisters of the Christian faith in celebrating Jesus Christ as the Way, the Truth and the Life. This is the heart of our faith. This is the basis of our hope. This is the source of our joy. I also came to speak words of esteem and friendship for all who believe in God, and for all men and women of good will. My message has likewise been a proclamation of human dignity, and an appeal for human solidarity and peace, under the sign of truth and justice, freedom and love. And all of this, dear people of Australia, is my wish for you today and in the years ahead. Remember always who you are, where you are going and why. Remember how much you have to offer to the world and how much its destiny depends on you. As a nation you are called to greatness, for you are called to love God and serve your fellowman! And now: Advance, Australia Fair! © Copyright 1986 - Libreria Editrice Vaticana

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