



The Holy See

PASTORAL VISIT TO NEW ZEALAND

WELCOME CEREMONY

ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II

Auckland (New Zealand), 22 November 1986

I am grateful for your presence. This is the greatest gift on your part. I thank you for your presence, for all that you have sung, for your introduction to the past, to the history of New Zealand and its people. I appreciate deeply the Maori tradition, this tradition which finds today a new expression and proves by this expression that it is still alive. I thank you very much for your words, for your allocutions, for your songs, for your gifts, and now I want to offer you also a gift. Being the Bishop of Rome, the Successor of Peter, I am also a son of my people, and the Image of Our Lady of Czestochowa I offer you today expresses this fundamental attitude of myself and yourselves. God our Father created all of us and situated everyone of us in a family, in a human family, in a small family of our own, and in a large family of our people, of our nations; and through the family, the small and the large, everyone of us is also introduced into the family of God, the Church, the People of God. Through our family, the small and the large, everyone of you, of us, is introduced to humanity, to be a human person, and to be as a human person, and to be as a human person a child of God. I thank you from my heart for this first meeting of welcome. I greet the Maori people and also the guests of Thaiti, and I greet also all the people of Auckland and of New Zealand, gathered here largely in different groups, of different origins, altogether one people, citizens of the same State, of the same homeland. I greet everyone of you and all of you. I greet the whole New Zealand people and I thank you for your cordial welcome to me. Thank you very much. © Copyright 1986 - Libreria Editrice Vaticana

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