



The Holy See

***DISCORSO DI GIOVANNI PAOLO II
AL PRIMO AMBASCIATORE DELLA REPUBBLICA DI SAN MARINO
PRESSO LA SANTA SEDE, S.E. IL PROFESSOR GIOVANNI GALASSI****

Sabato, 3 gennaio 1987

1. In the year which has just ended, the Holy See and the Republic of San Marino decided that the Legation of the Republic should be raised to the rank of an Embassy and that the Holy See would accredit a Nuncio to the Republic for the first time. In delivering to me today the Letters which accredit you as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Your Excellency thus inaugurates a new phase, full of hope, in the relationships between the two partners.

Although the title with which you present yourself today is new, this is not a new place in which you are called to carry out your high mission, since you have represented San Marino as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in these last years. This rich experience of the questions related to the life of the Church provides you with many indications for an ever more advantageous service on behalf of the Republic, on behalf of the Church which is in San Marino, and, as Your Excellency significantly chose to emphasize, on behalf of progress and peaceful relationships between peoples.

2. I thank you warmly for the courteous words which you have addressed to me and for the noble ideals which you have proposed as the basis of your future activity as Ambassador.

I am happy to hear from your lips the confirmation that San Marino intends to continue in the line of the glorious tradition of ordered civil development and of sound moral and religious values – a tradition that marks its centuries – old history.

The Republic of Mount Titano is one of the most ancient States in the world, universally known and esteemed for the nobility of its traditions, for the richness of its civil patrimony, and for its

convinced adherence to the Catholic faith. For many centuries, the Republic has been a community of free, hardworking and peaceful citizens.

As I pointed out in the recent Message for the celebration of the World Day of Peace, just and authentic peace exists only when men, women and children can live their human dignity to the full, when the State safeguards the legitimate freedom of every person and promotes the values which truly benefit individuals and society (Message for World Day of Peace 1987, n. 6). I am confident that my appeal to Heads of State and of Government, that they make every effort to promote the integral development of individuals and nations, with particular concern to give a place to the higher values of the spirit, will be listened to and fully accepted by the supreme Governors of the Republic of San Marino.

3. To achieve such ends, which constitute the constant aspiration of the persons and the peoples of the world, it is necessary to conserve and transmit faithfully to the new generations not only the living patrimony of freedom, but also the values of the spirit and, in the first place, the value of faith.

Your Excellency was kind enough to recall my visit to San Marino, on 29 August 1982. On that occasion – of which I retain a very affectionate and grateful memory – I was able to «recall and praise publicly» the values of liberty, of which the Church of Mount Titano constitutes such a living and unique testimony, and I invited a consideration of its «moral aspects» and «its deep spiritual root» (Discourse to the Captains Regent and to the Authorities of the Republic, n. 2) The profession of the Christian faith is, at the same time, the guarantee of the harmonious development of the person and of the community, and a source of the fundamental liberties which are connatural to every person and are a significant factor in the promotion of peace, both internally among the citizens and in external relationships with the other States.

I am confident that it is upon such convictions that the institutional relationships between the Church and the Republic too will develop, contributing towards new horizons of collaboration for the common good, in accordance with the teachings of the Second Vatican Council and in harmony with the centuries-old tradition of San Marino.

4. The Community of Mount Titano has never renounced its own liberty or its own national and religious identity. All of its history constitutes a proof of the unbreakable link between the value of liberty and the value of faith.

As I recalled in my homily at the stadium of Serravalle, the Republic recognizes its own origins in the community which grew up around « an exceptional follower of Christ who had attained to the light of truth and the life of grace and offered, even in public life, the evangelical testimony of a layman who lived in harmony with his own faith and was fearless in the defence of human dignity». From this primitive nucleus of « free sons – to use the celebrated expression attributed to St

Marinus when he was at the point of death – arose the Republic which, in the course of the centuries, has been distinguished to its independence, its capacity for defending its own prerogatives, the hospitality offered to exiles and refugees: a testimony to civil, juridical and political values which excites admiration, and a testimony which the people of Mount Titano inherited from its founder and protector, who has, significantly, been invoked from the eleventh century onwards as the «Author of liberty» (Homily at the stadium of Serravalle n.2)

Mr. Ambassador, I am certain that this ideal path of the life of San Marino will never be interrupted, and that the Republic, which you worthily represent here, will continue along the way traced by the fathers. This is my wish for San Marino, for its Supreme Magistrates and, in a particular way, for Your Excellency, at the start both of your mission and of the new year, and I invoke on you the abundant blessings of God.

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