



# The Holy See

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**ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER JOHN PAUL II  
TO H.E. EDMOND LEE BROWNING,  
PRESIDING BISHOP OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

*Monday 12 January 1987*

*Dear Bishop Browning,*

It is a great joy for me to welcome you and your party to Rome. I am happy that you chose to make a visit to the Vatican at an early stage of your ministry as Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America. I assure you of my prayers that your service to Christ will bear great spiritual fruit.

As I greet you this morning my thoughts return to that occasion, less than three months ago, when I welcomed here the Archbishop of Canterbury. It was the day after the World Day of Prayer for Peace in Assisi. The Archbishop was accompanied at Assisi by the Anglican Primates of Nigeria, Tanzania, Japan, Jerusalem and the Middle East. Together they represented the Anglican Communion and their presence was truly appreciated. I recall with gratitude the service in the Cathedral of Assisi at which Christians from all over the world prayed together. The unity in prayer on that day was not only a marvellous spiritual experience for those of us who were there, but was also a sign to the world of the growing solidarity between us, a solidarity which is rooted in our baptism into Christ.

I know, Bishop Browning, that like those of us who gathered at Assisi you share a great uneasiness about the conflicts and the violence which beset our world. I pray that in the years to come our voices will always speak as one about social justice, the search for peace, and the dignity and right to life of every human being.

We thank God for the progress that has so far been made along the path to unity of faith between

the Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion. May that progress continue, and may our prayer today be a sign of the real though imperfect communion that exists between us and of our desire to deepen it.

Welcome to Rome, dear brother in Jesus Christ. welcome to the city which has been honoured by the blood of the first Christian martyrs. I know that you carry in your heart the hopes and aspirations as well as the pain and suffering of many Episcopalians in the United States. I would ask you, when you return to your country, to convey to all those for whom you have pastoral care the cordial greetings of the Successor of Peter.

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