



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY
TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND CANADA

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
TO THE PEOPLE OF PHOENIX AND THE AMERICAN SOUTHWEST**

*Basilica of Saint Mary, Civic Plaza (Phoenix)
Monday, 14 September 1987*

Dear Friends,

1. With fraternal esteem, I extend to all of you - the people of *Phoenix and the American Southwest* - my greetings of joy and peace! You have welcomed me with open arms. I thank you for your most cordial hospitality.

Hoy de modo particular, deseo saludar a nuestros hermanos *hispanoablantes*. Vuestra hospitalidad llama a la mente aquella fuerza, vitalidad y generosidad que la comunidad hispana ha traído a los Estados Unidos. Os aliento a crecer cada vez más en comunión en la Iglesia y a enriquecerla con la profesión y la práctica de vuestra fe, la fe de los pioneros, de los misioneros y mártires. ¡Que a todos bendiga Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe!

2. By a happy act of providence, my visit to Arizona coincides with *the seventy-fifth anniversary of Arizona's statehood*. On this happy occasion, I offer to all of you my best wishes and congratulations.

Like all of America's Southwest, Arizona faces challenges of *amazing growth*. I am told that the motto of your state is "*Ditat Deus*", "God enriches". And indeed you have all around you ample proof of this enrichment: in the majesty and beauty of your landscape, and especially in the diversity and giftedness of your people. Your State and the ever-growing number of its citizens have been greatly blessed and enriched by God. In the past forty years, in particular, you have

experienced *remarkable progress and development*. And this brings with it increased obligations and responsibilities.

3. My visit to Arizona also coincides with another anniversary. *Twenty years* have passed since Pope Paul VI published his important encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, which was a document of great insight on the topic of true human development as seen in the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Although two decades have passed since the encyclical first appeared, its message remains today, as then, both challenging and prophetic.

A fundamental principle put forth by Pope Paul is that development, in order to be truly authentic, must *contribute to the good of the whole person* (Cfr. Pauli VI *Populorum Progressio*, 14). Thus, development can never be reduced to economic expansion alone or to values that are strictly temporal. What is at stake ultimately is the well-being of persons in all *the spiritual and physical dimensions* of their humanity, including the moral, social, cultural and economic aspects.

Efforts aimed at promoting development need to be accompanied by the search for *a transcendent humanism*, a humanism which is oriented towards God. Your Arizona State motto expresses well the reason for this: *God enriches*. Yes, God alone is the source of all that is good. God alone is the Creator of all things. As the Apostle Saint Paul once said: "It is he (God) who gives to all life and breath and everything else... In him we live and move and have our being" (*Act. 17, 25-28*). In order to be genuine, development must aim at improving people's living conditions and at the same time promote a transcendent humanism which acknowledges the sovereignty of God.

4. By its very nature, true human advancement is *necessarily outgoing*; it cannot be concentrated on itself. It must reach out to include more and more people in its influence. Any progress which would secure the betterment of a select few at the expense of the greater human family would be an erroneous and distorted progress. It would be an outrage against the demands of justice and an affront to the dignity of every human being.

In this regard, the following words of Pope Paul VI ring true: "Both for nations and for individuals, avarice is the most evident form of moral underdevelopment" (Pauli VI *Populorum Progressio*, 19). And that is why he insisted on the need for a *spirit of human solidarity* to accompany all efforts of development. The temptation towards avarice is certainly not restricted to any one nation or group of people. In fact, it is part and parcel of our common human condition which stands in need of constant conversion. Yet, does not the temptation present itself more forcefully to those who have received a larger share in the material goods of the earth?

The Second Vatican Council of the Catholic Church stated unequivocally: "Advanced nations have a very heavy obligation to help the developing peoples" (*Gaudium et Spes*, 86). These words apply with special relevance to the people of Arizona and of all the United States whom God has so richly blessed. As you look with gratitude upon the high standard of living that many of you

enjoy, at least in comparison to the rest of the world, *may your hearts go out to the less fortunate*. May your hearts and hands be open to the poor, both within your own society and in developing nations of the world. Just as God enriches you, so may you be channels of enrichment for others.

5. Those of us who are Christians draw inspiration to take up this task from the words and example of *our Lord Jesus Christ*. Although he is God, he humbled himself and assumed our humanity, becoming one like us in all things but sin (Cfr. *Phil.* 2, 5-11; *Hebr.* 4, 15). Thus, he forged a bond of *unbreakable solidarity with every human being*. In him our humanity is sacred and forever linked with God.

En su ministerio público, vemos cómo Jesús vino no para ser servido sino para servir. Uno de los signos de su misión fue la predicación del Evangelio a los pobres (Cfr. *Matth.* 11, 2-5); en su vida diaria, Él mostró un amor especial hacia los pobres y los que sufren. Estamos convencidos, por consiguiente, de que si seguimos las enseñanzas y el ejemplo de Nuestro Señor, nosotros estrecharemos nuestra unión mutua, particularmente con los necesitados, y experimentaremos aquella dimensión trascendente de la vida que solamente puede ser alcanzada estando en unión con Dios.

Dear friends: I have spoken with you today about development because I am convinced, as was Pope Paul VI, that in our highly technological age "*the new name for peace is development*" (Cfr. Pauli VI *Populorum Progressio*, 87). If we wish then to promote the tranquillity of order in our world, we must be deeply committed to that authentic development which contributes to the good of every person everywhere, in all the dimensions of human life. For this reason *my appeal to America is for human solidarity throughout this land and far beyond its borders*. This is the culmination of true progress; this is the measure of true greatness; this is the condition of true and lasting peace for America and for the world!

God bless Arizona! God bless you all! *Ditat Deus!*

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