



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
TO THE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT AND CITIZENS
OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA**

Monday, 6 February 1989

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to welcome you, Members of Parliament and distinguished citizens of the Republic of Korea, sons and daughters of a people gifted with a millenary tradition of wisdom and cultural achievements.

I have many happy memories of my visit to Korea in the Spring of 1984, as a pilgrim to the Church that lives and grows in your country. That event gave me the opportunity to proclaim to the whole Catholic world the example of faith and courage of the many martyrs who gave their lives for Christ in your land.

Following the teaching of Christ and the example of the martyrs, the Church in your country is responding to new challenges which constantly arise. As your Bishops have often pointed out, the present situation calls for a renewed commitment to the promotion of moral truths and values, especially respect for the sacredness of human life, which is often not sufficiently safeguarded in the context of modern ideologies and consumerism.

There is a specific area in which the laity of the Church are called to work with special competence and energy so that the Gospel message may bear fruit in the world, namely, in the promotion of justice and peace. In the recently published Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation I again emphasized that it is necessary for humanity to free itself from the countless repetition of conflict which has marked its history. In ways that accord with each one's calling, all have a role to play in society in furthering the genuine peace and justice for which all people yearn (Cfr. Ioannis Pauli PP II *Christifideles Laici*, 6. 36 et 42).

I am well aware of the efforts which are being made also in your country to perfect democracy and the observance of human rights. I am sure that in this task Christians will bear in mind their responsibility to be “the salt of the earth and the light of the world” (*Matth. 5, 13-14*).

The International Eucharistic Congress which will be celebrated in Seoul next October on the theme of “Christus Pax Nostra” will be a splendid occasion for reflection and prayerful support of the work of those who promote peace among peoples and nations. In the faith and love taught by the Gospel, the Christian community will find the motivation and strength to present the ideal of peace and reconciliation to all men and women of good will.

Certainly your fellow-citizens are filled with this aspiration and they look forward to the healing of the great anguish stemming from the division which history has imposed on families and individuals. Cardinal Kim himself has reminded you recently that reconciliation is born of prayer and a conversion of heart.

I join him and all the Bishops, and all who nourish sentiments of peace, invoking the assistance of the Prince of Peace so that this deep movement of reconciliation will be strengthened through the Eucharistic Congress and will more and more enlighten and guide the hearts and lives of all the Korean people.

On you and your families, and on all the Korean people I implore God’s abundant blessings.

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