



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
TO THE PILGRIMS FROM NORWAY
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 150th ANNIVERSARY
OF THE RESTORATION OF THE CHURCH IN THE COUNTRY**

*Clementine Hall
Friday, 8 October 1993*

Kjære brodre i bispe-embedet,
Kjære brodre og søstre i Kristus,

*Dear Brother Bishops,
Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,*

Det glæder meg å kunne ønske dere velkommen på deres pilegrimsreise fra Norge, i anledning av ett-hundre-og-femtiåes-jubileet for Kirkens tilbakekomst til deres land. Jeg hilser særlig Biskop Gerhard Schwenzer av Oslo, Biskop Gerhard Goebel av prelaturet Tromsø, og fader Georg Müller av prelaturet Trondheim.

I am pleased to welcome this pilgrimage from Norway, on the occasion of the hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the restoration of the Church in your country. My special greetings go to Bishop Gerhard Schwenzer of Oslo, to Bishop Gerhard Goebel of the Territorial Prelature of Tromsø and to Father Georg Müller of the Territorial Prelature of Trondheim.

Our meeting today brings vivid memories of my Pastoral Visit to Norway four years ago. I was able to experience at first hand and to acknowledge publicly the profound effect which a thousand years of Christian life has had on Norwegian society. As I said on the day of my arrival in Oslo: "Your attention to those in need, your care for the handicapped, the weak and the aged, your protection of the rights of women and of minorities, your willingness to share your wealth with the poor of the world, the generosity with which you have opened your frontiers to refugees, and

Norway's contribution to peace in the world – these are all values which have grown out of your Christian heritage, out of Norway's 'baptismal grace'" (John Paul II, *Homily during the Mass with the members of the Episcopal Conference of the Nordic Countries in Oslo*, 4, 1 June 1989).

This anniversary is a suitable occasion for all Norwegians to give thanks to Almighty God for the abundant harvest of good works which belief in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ has produced down the centuries. For Catholics it is a time to rejoice in the restoration and progressive extension of religious freedom, which has developed into increasing mutual understanding and closer cooperation between the Christian Churches and Ecclesial Communities.

Every jubilee celebration invites us also to look with hope towards the future. In recent years, Norway has been enriched by the arrival of many immigrants, who have found in the Church a welcome home and ready assistance in their needs. In facing the resulting pastoral challenges, the Church in your country has *a great opportunity for spiritual growth* and for a deeper awareness of the *communion of all the members of Christ's Body in the Holy Spirit who pours forth the Father's love into our hearts* (Cf. Rom. 5: 5).

Dear friends: I pray that your pilgrimage to Rome will strengthen your resolve to share the gift of faith with others. I urge you to bear ever more joyful witness to the Gospel, the "word of truth" (Col. 1:5) which reveals the authentic meaning of human life and destiny. Together with your brothers and sisters of other Christian communities, be messengers of the splendour of that truth in your society, and so encourage all Norwegians to a *renewal of faith in Christ and commitment to the Gospel values* which have shaped your country's history.

Måtte Olav den Hellige, den vise konge og trofaste etterfølger av Kristus, styrke dere og alle Norges kristne på deres vei i troskap til den dåpens nåde dere har tatt imot. Med stor hengivenhet til dere i Herren, lyser jeg av hele mitt hjerte min apostoliske velsignelse over dere alle: May Saint Olav, wise king and faithful follower of Christ, sustain you and your fellow citizens along the way of fidelity to the grace of your Baptism. With great affection in the Lord, I cordially impart to all of you my Apostolic Blessing.

Gud Velsine Norge!

Gud velsigne hele det norske folk!

Gut velsigne Norge!

Gut velsigne hele det norske folk!

