



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY

OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II

TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA **WELCOMING CEREMONY ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II**

Newark International Airport (Newark, New Jersey)

Wednesday, 4 October 1995

Mr President,

Dear Friends,

Dear People of America,

1. It is a great joy for me to return to the United States, as I had hoped to do last year. Thank you all for receiving me so warmly. This is a land of much generosity, and its people have always been quick to extend their hands in friendship and to offer hospitality. Thank you especially, President Clinton, for coming here today in that same spirit.

For my part, I greet you and all the representatives of the federal, state and local governments. I greet the Bishops' Conference of the United States and the individual Bishops who have invited me to their Dioceses and have worked so hard, with countless co-workers, to prepare for this visit. I look forward to meeting the Catholic communities of Newark, Brooklyn, New York and Baltimore, as well as our brothers and sisters of other Christian Churches and Ecclesial Communities. To the members of the Jewish faith I extend a very cordial greeting and my respectful best wishes on this day of special significance for them.

I greet all the people of this great nation, of every race, color, creed, and social condition. I pray for you all and assure you of my profound esteem.

2. Exactly thirty years ago today my predecessor, Pope Paul VI, spoke to the United Nations General Assembly and delivered a message that still resounds in many hearts. "No more war, war never again!" He went on to appeal: "Peace, it is peace which must guide the destinies of people"

(Paul VI, *Address to the United Nations Organization*, 4 Oct. 1965).

I too come as a pilgrim of peace and understanding among peoples. Tomorrow, in observance of the *United Nations' Fiftieth Anniversary*, I shall return there to express my deep conviction that the ideals and intentions which gave origin to that worldwide Organization half a century ago are more indispensable than ever in a world searching for purpose.

The world, in fact, is undergoing a profound transformation. Opportunities for justice, reconciliation and development are visible in parts of the world where they were hardly discernible even a few years ago—almost within our reach, it seems, but still so difficult to grasp. Ancient rivalries and suspicions still compromise the cause of peace. We must find ways to set them aside. If we do not, history and the Lord of history will judge us harshly.

3. Especially since the events of 1989, the *role of the United States* in the world has taken on a *new prominence*. Your widespread influence is at once political, economic, military and, due to your communications media, cultural. It is vital for the human family that in continuing to seek advancement in many different fields – science, business, education and art, and wherever else your creativity leads you – America keeps compassion, generosity and concern for others at the very heart of its efforts.

In particular, for nations and peoples emerging from a long period of trial, your country stands upon the world scene as a model of a democratic society at an advanced stage of development. *Your power of example carries with it heavy responsibilities*. Use it well, America! Be an example of justice and civic virtue, freedom fulfilled in goodness, at home and abroad!

4. From its beginning until now, the United States has been a *haven for generation after generation of new arrivals*. Men, women and children have streamed here from every corner of the globe, building new lives and forming a society of rich ethnic and racial diversity, based on commitment to a shared vision of human dignity and freedom. Of the United States we can truly say, "E pluribus unum".

It is my prayerful hope that *America will persevere in its own best traditions of openness and opportunity*. It would indeed be sad if the United States were to turn away from that enterprising spirit which has always sought the most practical and responsible ways of continuing to share with others the blessings God has richly bestowed here.

The same spirit of *creative generosity* will help you to *meet the needs of your own poor and disadvantaged*. They too have a role to play in building a society truly worthy of the human person – a society in which none are so poor that they have nothing to give and none are so rich that they have nothing to receive. The poor have needs which are not only material and economic, but also involve liberating their potential to work out their own destiny and to provide for the well-being of

their families and communities. America will continue to be a land of promise as long as it remains a land of freedom and justice for all.

5. Mr President, Ladies and Gentlemen: I come as one who has an abiding hope in America's noble destiny. I thank God for allowing me to return to you again. Thank you and God bless you all!