



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS
SPONSORED BY THE UNION OF CHRISTIAN INSTITUTIONS
AMONG AND FOR ITALIAN MIGRANTS**

Saturday, 17 April 2004

*Dear and Venerable Brothers in the Episcopate and in the Priesthood,
Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

1. I am pleased to greet you on the occasion of the International Congress of the Union of Christian Institutions Among and For Italian Migrants. I offer you my cordial greetings, and through you I address an affectionate thought to all the communities of Italian emigrants scattered across the world. I thank your President, Mr Adriano Dégano, for his courteous words on behalf of those present.

You work among the many Christian associations for emigrants in a way that is well integrated in the parish communities and in a spirit of generous brotherly collaboration. This gives me great joy and I encourage you always to foster the religious dimension of your sodalities in order to keep alive the values inherited from your fathers and pass them on to the new generations. You will thus make an important contribution to evangelization. Indeed, in our day too, as in the past, evangelization is closely connected with phenomena of migration. I urge you to make sure that your faith is always accompanied by a witness of fraternal love and effective attention to all who are in difficulty.

2. I thank you for your visit and I entrust you and your respective associations to Mary Most Holy, calling on her as Mother of Migrants.

With these sentiments, I cordially impart my Blessing to you all, and I extend it to all those you encounter every day in your apostolic work.
