



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO A DELEGATION
FROM THE CROATIAN CITY OF DUBROVNIK***

Thursday, 29 April 2004

*Venerable Brother Bishop,
Madam Mayor,
Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

1. I receive you with great joy. Welcome!

You have come to consign the document of honorary citizenship which the city of Dubrovnik has wished to grant me as a confirmation of the deep bonds that throughout the centuries have united it to the Pontiffs, and to commemorate the Pastoral Visit I had the joy of making on 6 June of last year. I still vividly remember the various moments of that Apostolic Pilgrimage, on which precisely in Dubrovnik I proclaimed Blessed an illustrious daughter of Croatia: Marija of Jesus Crucified Petkovic, native of Blato on the island of Korcula.

2. I recall that at the conclusion of that Holy Mass of Beatification, I addressed a special "thank you" to the beloved city; I now renew once more my heartfelt expression of gratitude for your warm hospitality.

I am likewise grateful and pleased that you have wished to count me among the citizens of the ancient and beautiful city of Dubrovnik, an authentic "pearl" of the Croatian Adriatic, an age-old cultural centre permeated by the Catholic faith and marked by constant fidelity to the Successors of Peter, even in very difficult times. May this cultural and religious patrimony also develop and grow in the future, producing abundant fruit for the benefit of Dubrovnik and the entire Croatian Nation.

3. May the Most Holy Mother of God invoked as the Madonna of the Great Croatian Baptismal Vow, St Joseph and St Blase watch over the inhabitants of Dubrovnik and those of the County of Dubrovnik-Neretva.

God bless Dubrovnik, from this day on, my city, too, and along with the entire Land of Croatia.

Praised be Jesus and Mary!