



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE
"MISSIONARY YOUTH SERVICE (SERMIG) - ARSENAL OF PEACE"**

Saturday, 31 January 2004

Dear friends of SERMIG - Arsenal of Peace,

1. Once again I meet you with joy and warmly greet you all. Your large presence - I see in particular many young people - becomes an eloquent sign of the vitality of your Fraternity and of the will that moves you to work at the service of peace. "Arsenal of peace": this is the name of what could be known as your real home, the "forge" of your projects and activities. You want to be messengers, witnesses and tireless apostles of peace. Thank you for your youthful enthusiasm! Thank you for the hope that you represent for the Church and the world!

2. A special greeting to the Cardinals, to the Bishops and to your priests friends. I would also like to extend a cordial greeting to Mr Ernesto Olivero, who founded your well-deserving Association 40 years ago. I thank him for the kind words he has used to express your shared feelings, explaining to me the meaning of today's event. I greet the President and the actors of the "Company of Turin" theatre group and the "Voices of Hope" orchestra and choir of the Arsenal of Peace, who have put on an interesting artistic and musical performance. I greet the authorities and those who have wished to attend this important engagement.

Through you, dear brothers and sisters of SERMIG, I would like to extend my best wishes to many boys and girls who, in different nations, endeavour to lay the foundations for a "Friendly World" where no one will feel a stranger and all will cooperate in the service of justice and peace.

3. The theme of today's gathering - "Peace will win provided we dialogue" - highlights the close relationship between respect for others, dialogue and peace. In our age, characterized by a large network of exchanges between diverse cultures and religions, it becomes necessary to promote

and facilitate the acceptance and reciprocal understanding between individuals and peoples. Your Fraternity is dedicated to this mission and offers a contribution, appreciated by many, toward the cause of peace. On this subject, I also congratulate you on instituting the "University of Dialogue", whose purpose is to give a voice to young persons of every nation, culture and religion, in order to construct a world where all are full members of the one human family. This dialogue must embrace every aspect of life: social, economic and religious.

4. In the [Message for the recent World Day of Peace](#), I recalled that teaching peace is a constant duty, an urgency of our time. In the face of spreading violence, the diffusion of a hedonistic and consumerist mentality and the growth of distrust and fear, we must reaffirm vigorously that peace is possible and therefore, if it is possible, it is also a duty. You have put this conviction into practice throughout your Institute's 40 years of existence. Continue, dear friends, to go in this same direction. May the Virgin Mother of Christ accompany you. May St Francis, to whom your Fraternity is linked, protect you, along with the saint of Turin, John Bosco, whose liturgical feast day we are celebrating today, and all of your patron saints. The Pope loves you and assures you of his prayers, blessing each one of you and your numerous apostolic and missionary projects.