



The Holy See

***GREETING OF THE HOLY FATHER
TO THE DELEGATION OF
"THE NATIONAL ITALIAN AMERICAN FOUNDATION"***

*Room adjacent to the Audience Hall
Wednesday 4 June 2025*

[Multimedia]

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. [Amen.]

Peace be with you. [And with your Spirit.]

Welcome to all of you, please be seated.

Again, good morning, I am happy to meet with you. I apologize to have kept you waiting. The Vatican scheduling system puts four audiences all at the same time. That way, unfortunately, you have to wait for me and not vice versa. I will give a brief formal statement, and then will be happy to greet you all individually. Then I have the General Audience in Piazza San Pietro following this meeting.

Dear brothers and sisters,

I am pleased to greet you, the members of the Board of Directors of the National Italian American Foundation as your organization celebrates its fiftieth anniversary. As you well know, tens of millions of Americans proudly claim their Italian heritage, even if their ancestors arrived in the United States of America generations ago. Your work to continue to educate young people regarding Italian culture and history, as well as providing scholarships and other charitable

assistance in both countries, helps to maintain a mutually beneficial and concrete connection between the two nations.

A hallmark of many who immigrated to the United States from Italy was their Catholic faith, with its rich traditions of popular piety and devotions that they continued to practice in their new nation. This faith sustained them in difficult moments, even as they arrived with a sense of hope for a prosperous future in their new country. Your visit to the Vatican occurs during the Jubilee Year, which is focused on hope, which “dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come, despite our not knowing what the future may bring” (*Spes Non Confundit*, 1). In an age beset by many challenges, may your time here, in a city marked by the tombs of the Apostles Peter and Paul as well as many saints who strengthened the Church throughout difficult periods of history, may this renew your sense of hope and trust in the future. I pray that each of you and your families will always cherish the rich spiritual and cultural legacy that you have inherited from those who have gone before you.

With these sentiments, I gladly impart to you my Apostolic Blessing, which I willingly extend to your families, to all your loved ones. Thank you.

The blessing is written in Latin, but I think we can do it in English.

The Lord be with you. [And with your Spirit.]

May the blessing of Almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, come upon you all and remain with you forever. Amen.