



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY TO ISTANBUL, EPHESUS AND SMYRNA

**ADDRESS OF PAUL VI
TO THE ARMENIAN PATRIARCH
HIS BEATITUDE SNORK KALUSTIAN**

Istanbul, 25 July 1967

Dear brother in Christ,

With heartfelt good wishes, We express to Your Beatitude Our warm greetings and Our joy in meeting you during Our pilgrimage to this land, which has given such magnificent testimony to the most noble traditions of the Christian Faith.

On two occasions already - in Our own See of Rome and in the Holy City of Jerusalem - We have had the happiness of exchanging the fraternal kiss of peace with worthy representatives of the Armenian Church: the venerable Catholicos of Cilicia, Khoren the First, and the esteemed Patriarch of Jerusalem, Yeghishe Derderian. That happiness is renewed now as We salute you, the pastor of the Orthodox Armenians of Turkey.

Through Your Beatitude, We also salute all the faithful of the Armenian Church. With sentiments of fraternal esteem and respect, We greet the venerable Supreme Catholicos of the Armenians, Vasken the First, with whom We have maintained very cordial relations during the recent Second Vatican Council, and since the closing of the sessions of that Council. May the meeting We enjoy with you today strengthen and deepen those relations for the good of the Holy Church and its unity, and may God spread abundant blessings of peace and prosperity upon those faithful of whom His Holiness Vasken the First is the chief pastor.

We know the fidelity of your people, and the glories of their witness to Christ, the Lord of the Church, down through the centuries. With respect and admiration, We recall their devotion to their

great Fathers and Doctors, whom we of the Catholic Church are proud to salute as our common Fathers and Doctor in the Faith.

In particular, as We prepare to visit the place made glorious by the inspired witness of the Fathers of the Council of Ephesus, it is a great consolation to meditate upon the vision of Christ presented to the Church and to the world by that holy assembly. That vision, too, we share in common. God, made man for our salvation, is the God we confess in our Creed and preach to the world. The Holy Virgin who gave birth to God, and whom the Fathers of Ephesus joyfully and reverently hailed as «Theotokos», is still today our advocate, our model, our Mother.

During the Year of Faith celebrating the anniversary of the martyrdom of the great Apostles Peter and Paul, it is Our hope that all Christians will strive to penetrate more deeply into the mystery of Christ. In witness to Him, the holy Apostles shed their blood. In service to Him, the Fathers of the great Ecumenical Councils, as successors to the Apostles, gave their witness of fidelity. May the Holy Mother of God aid us also to be faithful witnesses and humble servants of her Son, Who is our Lord.

In the course of the centuries, the bonds of communion between us have grown weak. Christ Our Lord calls upon us with special urgency today to strive to re-establish perfect communion in charity and truth. As We greet Your Beatitude, We reaffirm Our intention to respond to that call with all the force at Our command, confident that it finds an attentive response also in you, and in the faithful Armenian people.