



The Holy See

MESSAGE OF THE HOLY FATHER PAUL VI FOR PEACE IN IRELAND

Saturday, 1 June 1974

*To Our Venerable Brother Cardinal William Conway
Archbishop of Armagh*

On this solemnity of Pentecost, on which last year there was celebrated a World Day of Prayer for Peace in Ireland, we wish to send this affectionate message to you and through you to the Hierarchy and to all the beloved Irish ecclesial community, which we see so worthily represented by you in your capacity as Primate of All Ireland and President of the Episcopal Conference.

We continue to follow with growing anxiety and concern the protraction of an intolerable situation, which, far from improving through a general effort to bring about reconciliation, has in fact been aggravated by a tragic increase of blind and unspeakable acts of violence, acts which have claimed so many victims and thrown so many families into mourning.

Public order and safety have thus been undermined and it would seem in the present sad circumstances as though human life itself has come to be regarded as of little value and as if the violence of passions has led people to forget that basic truth, so vitally important for civilized coexistence, namely, that human life is sacred, that it comes from God, the Creator and Author of all good things, and that he alone therefore has any right over it.

We earnestly beg that all violence should cease, from whatever side it may come, for it is contrary to the law of God and to a Christian and civilized way of life; that, in response to the common Christian conscience and the voice of reason, a climate of mutual trust and dialogue be reestablished in justice and charity; that the real and deep-seated causes of social unrest-which are not to be reduced to differences of a religious nature-be identified and eliminated.

With affection as great as the esteem we have towards the whole of Ireland, which is most dear to us, we wish once again to make a strong appeal for a return to peace, so that the bond of a common Christian faith may finally enable love and harmony to prevail. We know that this is also the wish and desire of the vast majority of the industrious and faithful people.

May each one respond with a generous effort and reform of life to the commandment left to us by the Divine Master: "Love one another; just as I have loved you, you also must love one another. By this love you have for one another, everyone will know that you are my disciples" (*Io* 13, 35). May the Holy Spirit, with the fullness of his gifts, enlighten the minds of all and strengthen their determination to work with sincerity for peace and justice.

With all our heart we ask this of Almighty God, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and we invoke upon you and the beloved Irish people an abundance of divine grace, in pledge of which we affectionately impart our Apostolic Blessing.

From the Vatican, 28 May 1974

PAULUS PP. VI