



The Holy See

***RADIOMESSAGGIO DI SUA SANTITÀ PIO PP. XII
AGLI ALUNNI DELLE SCUOLE CATTOLICHE DEGLI STATI UNITI****

Mercoledì, 27 febbraio 1952

The little children are listening to Our voice, as We speak from Our home in St. Peter's in Rome, Our dear little children of America; and the thought makes Us very happy, — happy as the gentle Saviour was happy, when the children crowded round to catch His words and receive a blessing from Him. Did He tell them a story? You know, He was fond of stories. Let Us begin with one today.

Far away in a land across the sea there lived once upon a time a man, who loved children very much, and oh, so many claimed him as their father. But disaster came upon the land, and some of his children were left without food, and cold and sick, and many without a home. So they came crying to their father. « Father, look on our distress. What can we do? Your other children, happier in their lot than we, surely would help us, if only they knew. Can you tell them about us, please; because they are far away and our cries cannot reach them ». And the father said: « Of course, I will tell my other children ». And he sent messengers to them; and those other -children, when they heard all this, at once replied: « We are only too happy to help our brothers and sisters in need ». They brought food and sweaters and blankets, and some brought medicines, and others brought money, their Small allowances for candy and sweets. All these gifts were collected together and sent to the poor, suffering children, who once again began to smile and play and sing, because they saw that they would now have food and clothing and be cured, when they got sick. And the father went to a little magic box, and talking into it, told the kind-hearted children far away how grateful their brothers and sisters were for their gifts, and everybody was so glad.

But now, my dear children, you have already guessed the meaning of that story. You are the kind-hearted children; and far away over the seas you do have brothers and sisters. You have never seen them, but they really are your brothers and sisters, children of the one, true God in heaven; and the same Blessed Mother, Our Lady, watches over you all. And the « once upon a time »

really is now; because even now thousands of these little brothers and sisters are still cold and hungry and wander homeless and helpless. And so again this year We come to the radio, first to say a sincere « thank you » in the name of the poor children of Europe and of all the other countries to whom you sent your gifts last year and the years before that; and then just to remind you that your assistance is still needed. We know that you want to help; all you want to know is how. Your good teachers in school will tell you that, just what to bring and where to leave it.

But listen to one more word We have for you. Did you ever ask yourselves why Jesus showed such a special love for little children? He Himself gave a reason: « Because the kingdom of God belongs to such as these ». Yes, their innocence and simple goodness give them a sure claim to heaven. But, alas, they can lose that innocence; and when children are hungry, dressed only in rags and without a home, it is all the easier to lose that innocence. And how terribly sad that loss always is! So you see how all the relief you send will help to protect these unfortunate children, your brothers and sisters, against sin, keep them dear to the Heart of Christ and enable them to grow up brave defenders of God and His Church and loyal citizens of their country. That is what We hope and pray you, too, will be.

Good-by now, and remember to pray every day for the Holy Father in Rome, who now gives a special blessing with all the affection of His heart to you and your dear parents and your devoted teachers in school.

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