



The Holy See

***DISCORSO DI SUA SANTITÀ PIO PP. XII
AD UN PELLEGRINAGGIO NAZIONALE AMERICANO DI AMMALATI****

Domenica, 25 ottobre 1953

We are happy to extend a very special welcome to the First National Pilgrimage of Invalids to the Shrines of Europe, sponsored by the Confraternity of Pilgrims in the United States of America. In particular it is a great joy to Us to greet those of you who have endured great sacrifice, and even pain, to come from your homes thousands of miles away on a long and difficult journey, in order to visit the Vicar of Christ.

We know that you are members of the League of Shut-in Sodalists, which was founded largely through the persevering efforts of one of you, Our beloved daughter Mary Ellen Kelly. We are sure that your visit to the sacred shrines and the Eternal City has given you a new courage and strength to bear the sufferings that God has been pleased to ask of you.

You are especially dear to the heart of Our Divine Master, to His Blessed Mother, and also to Us, for with Saint Paul We may say to you: « The grace that has been granted to you is that of suffering for Christ's sake, not merely believing in Him » (*Phil. I, 29*). Treasure this suffering that is yours through God's will; bear it always in union with Our suffering Lord, offering it to Him for the increase and sanctification of the members of His Body. Thus you will help to « fill up the sufferings of Christ... for His Body, which is the Church » (*Col. I, 24*). In the words of Saint Peter, the first Vicar of Christ, We exhort you : « Do not be surprised, beloved, that this fiery ordeal should have befallen you, to test your quality; there is nothing strange in what is happening to you. Rather rejoice, when you share in some measure the sufferings of Christ; so joy will be yours, and triumph, when His glory is revealed » (*1 Petr. 4, 12, 13*).

Carry this message of Ours back to all the other members of your Sodality and League of Shut-in Sodalists who could not make this pilgrimage with you. And now, in a very special way and with all Our heart, We bless you and them, and all your loved ones, as well as all those who have helped

to make this pilgrimage possible and all those who have come with you.

**Discorsi e Radiomessaggi di Sua Santità Pio XII, XV,*

Quindicesimo anno di Pontificato, 2 marzo 1953 - 1° marzo 1954, p. 437

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