



The Holy See

***DISCORSO DI SUA SANTITÀ PIO XII
AL VICE PRESIDENTE DEGLI STATI UNITI D'AMERICA,
L'ON. RICHARD H. NIXON****

Domenica, 17 marzo 1957

In your honourable person, Mr. Vice-President, and in the gracious company of Mrs. Nixon and your distinguished Mission-Party gathered here this morning for a very welcome visit, We are happy once again to see represented so worthily the warmth and constancy of your beloved country's commitment to the cause of peaceful human relations within the family of nations.

At this delicate hour, which We fervently hope and pray may mark the ending of a too long-continued crisis in the fortunes of East and West, it is comforting to note the reliance placed by your illustrious President and generous people, as well as by those in every corner of the globe who share your hopes and fears, on the simple, informal, unfeigned expression of good will, as a key instrument for the settlement of international disputes.

That does not mean to disparage the need and function of treaties and collective agreements. Less than ever can the human family today dispense with charters and statements of policy, carefully and laboriously wrought and worded, and rounded out with solemn sanctions. Authentic peace is always the work of justice; and justice can be little more than hollow mockery without reverence for the laws of God. But over and above the legal device or diplomatic approach – rather within them as the spirit animates the letter – it is the beating of human hearts in brotherly unison that will avail to make covenants a living and liberating force for peace in the world community. Speaking of human relations St. Paul told the Romans, «it is the love of man for his fellow-man that fulfills the law». (*Rom.* 13, 8).

And how indeed may one expect the last sombre vestiges of mistrust to disappear, unless men of good will everywhere make it manifest, at home first and then abroad, that their professed decent respect for the conscience and dignity of mankind is firmly grounded on the rock of fraternal

solidarity under God, and not on the shifting sands of economic or political expediency? The open heart, We are sure you will agree, even more than the open hand, remains the surest test of sincerity, and so of moral rectitude, for nations as for neighbours.

Your Presidential mission of good will completed, then, Mr. Vice-President, God grant that you may bring home with you to America good news in abundance from the continents you have visited, the fresh and heartening evidence, that is, of the world's mounting esteem for those unchanging spiritual values, enshrined forever in the Gospel of the Prince of Peace, on which all our human institutions, frail as the best of them must be, will rest secure. With deep affection We pray that heaven's blessings may be vouchsafed to all your fellow-citizens and their beloved President. May God grant him health and comfort in the arduous duties of his high office and his unremitting labours in the cause of world peace.

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