



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE PARLIAMENT OF MACEDONIA
ON THE OCCASION OF THE CELEBRATION
OF STS CYRIL AND METHODIUS***

Thursday, 24 May 2007

*Mr President of the Parliament,
Honourable Members of the Government,*

Venerable Brother Representatives of the Orthodox Church and of the Catholic Church, I still retain a vivid memory of the recent meeting during which H.E. Mr Prime Minister conveyed to me the cordial greeting of the Prime Magistrate of your Country.

I also remember with pleasure the exchange of letters that followed confirming the friendship and good relations existing between the Apostolic See and the Republic that you worthily represent here. Since this collaboration embraces both civil and religious aspects, it promises further intensification in the future.

Today's meeting on the occasion of the traditional anniversary of the liturgical Memorial of Sts Cyril and Methodius also inserts us in this context of mutual esteem and friendship.

Masters in the faith of the Slavic peoples, these two great Apostles of the Gospel are invoked as intercessors and protectors by all Catholics of Europe, who wish to preserve unaltered the spiritual patrimony passed down to them and to build together a future of progress and peace for all.

In addressing to you my most cordial welcome, I make my own the hope you expressed, that not only the spiritual patrimony which you inherited be shared, but that your particular identity be accorded the due consideration you expect from the other European peoples who are close to you in terms of tradition and culture.

These Co-Patron Saints of Europe, to whom you rightfully refer, have traced a human and spiritual path that makes your Land a meeting place for diverse cultural and religious needs.

The peaceful settlement of the aspirations of the peoples who live there, project on the European Continent an example of effective and fruitful coexistence, to which the Holy See looks with favour.

My cordial wish is that you may always faithfully preserve the inheritance of your two holy Protectors, so that your voice, in the civil as well as the religious field, can be heard and given just consideration.

While I invoke from God serenity and peace for your Country, I am pleased, in this unique circumstance to renew to each one of you an expression of the benevolent friendship of the Apostolic See. I accompany my cordial sentiments with the assurance of my personal esteem and friendship.

Once again my sincere best wishes, and I confirm them with the prayer that I raise to God for you here present, the Authorities and the Macedonian People.

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