



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO A DELEGATION FROM THE FORMER YUGOSLAV
REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA
ON THE LITURGICAL MEMORIAL
OF STS CYRIL AND METHODIUS**

Monday, 23 May 2011

Mr President,

Hon. Members of the Government,

Distinguished Authorities,

Venerable Brothers of the Orthodox Church and of the Catholic Church,

I am particularly pleased to welcome you and to extend to each of you my cordial greeting, especially to the President of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The Feast of Sts Cyril and Methodius is a cause of joy for all of us. Sent to the Slavic people, these holy brothers announced the Gospel amidst great difficulty always sustained by an unwavering trust in the Lord. They were inspired by the passion to make known the Good News of Christ and for that reason they worked prodigiously to make Christian Doctrine known, recording it in books written in the Slavic language. No doubt this was a decisive factor in the growth and development of the Slavic culture and civilization in general. The witness and teaching of Sts Cyril and Methodius are still relevant for those who serve the Gospel today, and for those who are called to govern the futures of nations.

The life of these men was entirely dedicated to apostolic activity and the divine inspiration of making the message of Revelation accessible and comprehensible to peoples was the uniting cause of diverse traditions and cultures. In the acceptance of God's plan of salvation, people can rediscover the foundations on which to build a society imbued with the spirit of reconciliation and peaceful coexistence. There can be no real unity without respect for the dignity of every human person and his or her inalienable rights. The Gospel of Christ, as Sts Cyril and Methodius

understood, is capable of illuminating every part and dimension of human experience, making it fully human. The Word of God calls us continually to a conversion of heart, so that every decision, every choice, may be purified from selfish interests; and it is precisely from this steadfast conversion to God that it is possible to give birth to a new humanity.

Your annual pilgrimage to Rome is both an occasion for renewing the bonds of friendship between your Nation and the Catholic Church and for reinforcing your country's commitment to promote its good. Let us invoke the intercession of Sts Cyril and Methodius that the Lord may grant his peace and bless the people of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia!