



The Holy See

JOHN PAUL II **ANGELUS** *Sunday, 12 October 2003*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

1. Next Thursday, 16 October, will be the *25th anniversary of my Pontificate*. At 6: 00 p.m. in St Peter's Square I will celebrate a solemn Mass of Thanksgiving. I immediately thank all those who will be joining me in prayer, thanking God for his continuous and providential help.

2. Those days of October 1978 flash across my mind. Today I am thinking especially *of the first Angelus* that I recited from this window on 22 October. I then sought to "embrace" in the *mystery of the Incarnation*, which this prayer helps us to contemplate, "*the whole future of the Pontificate, of the People of God and of the whole human family, because*", I said, "the family begins with the father's will, but is always conceived under the mother's heart" (*L'Osservatore Romano* English edition, 2 November 1978, p. 2).

3. Now, as I think back to the past with gratitude, *I turn my gaze on the young people* with whom I have built up a preferential dialogue since the very beginning of my Petrine ministry. I recall that at the end of that first Angelus I added a special greeting to them, saying, "You are the future of the world, the hope of the Church. You are my hope!".

I must recognize that their response was truly encouraging. Today I would like *to thank them for having been constantly close to me* in these years, and I would like them to know that I continue to count on them.

I entrust them, O Mary, to you who are the eternal youth of the Church. Help them to be ready and available to do God's will, in order to build generously a world that is more just and more fraternal. I wish you all an enjoyable Sunday!

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