



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY TO IRELAND

ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER JOHN PAUL II TO THE MEMBERS OF THE IRISH GOVERNMENT

Dublin

Saturday, 29 September 1979

Mr Taoiseach,

I am very pleased that I can meet here with the Members of the Irish Government. You represent the aspirations, needs and future of the Irish people, but also their potential and the promises of the future that are contained in the past history of your country. The people of Ireland have had a long history of suffering and struggle to achieve their own cohesion as a modern State and to attain the measure of well-being that is due to every nation.

It is your privilege to serve the people, in their name and for their progress, though the mandate that the people have conferred on you. But there are also principles and imperatives that are of a higher order and without which no society can ever hope to foster the true common good. I do not need to spell out before you the demands of justice, of peaceful living in society, of respect and protection for the dignity that derives from the very nature and destiny of every human being as a creature of God's love. It is your task to embody in concrete and practical measures the collaboration of all the citizens towards these lofty goals.

An Ireland that is prosperous, peaceful and committed to the ideal of fraternal relations among its people is also a factor that will contribute to the peaceful and just future of Europe and the whole family of nations. Today at Drogheda, I have made a solemn and passionate plea for justice, for peace and for reconciliation, particularly with regard to the situation in Northern Ireland that can leave no Irishman, no Christian and certainly not the Pope indifferent. It is my fervent prayer that all the people of this Island will display the courage and find the ways for resolving a problem that

is not religious in nature, but that finds its origin in a variety of historical, social, economic and political reasons.

I desire to renew once again my cordial thanks to you for your kind welcome and for all that the public authorities have done to facilitate my pastoral visit to your country. I express my esteem for you and your colleagues in the Government. May each one, according to the office and the dignity that he holds, discharge his duties inspired by a true desire to foster peace, justice and the respect of the human person.

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