



# The Holy See

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## ***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II TO PARTICIPANTS OF THE COLUMBUS VOYAGE TRIP TO ITALY***

*Consistory Hall*

*Thursday, 7 May 1992*

*Dear Friends,*

I am pleased to greet the participants in the Columbus Voyage Trip to Italy, sponsored by the Columbus 500th Anniversary Committee of Philadelphia. This visit, marking the beginning of your city's celebration of the Columbian Year, aims at fostering an increased awareness of the importance of the discovery of America, an event which opened a new chapter in the history of the human family and led to the birth of new peoples and cultures.

The Church recalls with gratitude the spiritual significance of the discovery of the New World, principally the proclamation of the Gospel to the peoples of that Continent. From the seed planted by the first missionaries, the Christian message has taken root in the Americas, has grown and has brought forth an abundant harvest of faith, holiness and generous service to others. Today it is particularly fitting to recall the many generations of Italian Americans who as dedicated lay people or as priests and Religious have contributed to the growth of the Church and the accomplishment of her mission in your own country.

May your celebration of this Columbian Year give you a deeper appreciation of the faith and spiritual vision which inspired your forebears. May it lead to a renewed commitment to continue the work of building a society which fully respects the dignity of every human being made in the image and likeness of God.

Upon all of you I willingly invoke the abundant blessings of Almighty God.

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