



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE ALCIDE DE GASPERI FOUNDATION
FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND COOPERATION***

Saturday, 13 February 1999

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I am pleased to extend a cordial greeting to you all, members of the *Alcide De Gasperi Foundation for International Peace and Cooperation*, and I thank you for this visit, by which you mean to reaffirm your staunch loyalty to the Church's Magisterium and to confirm your commitment to promoting harmony among the peoples of the world. I extend a special greeting to Sen. Angelo Bernassola and express my sincere gratitude to him for the noble words he addressed to me on behalf of those present.

Taking its inspiration from the thoughts and work of the great Italian statesman Alcide De Gasperi, for over a quarter of a century your Foundation has been involved in promoting peace and cooperation among peoples through its study of the problems of international society and through relations with similar institutions in Europe and the world.

Among your praiseworthy initiatives, you have chosen as a fundamental reference- point the perennial values of the Christian faith, making an effort to combine them with the clear awareness that the road to peace comes through a strong, constant cultural commitment, jointly made with those who share your noble objectives.

Building peace is not the fruit of compromise, but stems from a deep and systematic knowledge of the remote and proximate causes of conflict, from sensitizing national leaders to the profound needs of the poor and from forming the younger generation in an authentic culture of peace. It is also fostered by the support offered to those who are tempted by the difficult situations that mankind has to face in our day to abandon the hard work of dialogue and of respect for the fundamental rights of each and every one.

2. In my recent [Message for the World Day of Peace](#) I said that "no human right is safe if we fail to commit ourselves to safeguarding all of them.... It is therefore essential that there should be a global approach to the subject of human rights

and a serious commitment to defend them. Only when a culture of human rights which respects different traditions becomes an integral part of humanity's moral patrimony shall we be able to look to the future with serene confidence.... Complete observance of human rights is the surest road to establishing solid relations between States. The culture of human rights cannot fail to be a culture of peace" (n. 12).

These are important suggestions for making your commitment as politicians and men of culture more and more forceful, so that you can be ever more effective "peacemakers" in today's society.

I hope that your Foundation, in the context of today's search for security and collaboration between peoples, may become a renewed instrument for promoting global action in support of peace, without allowing itself to be hindered by the inevitable obstacles that are met along this difficult but necessary path.

With these sentiments, as I entrust you and your daily efforts to the One whom we Christians invoke as Queen of Peace, I am pleased to impart my Blessing to you, to your co-workers and to your families.

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