



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF POPE PAUL VI TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA*

Tuesday, 2 July 1963

Your Excellency,

With great joy do We welcome Your Excellency to the Vatican, recalling with true happiness Our first meeting almost twenty-five years ago, when, as a young man, you accompanied your parents to the coronation of Pope Pius XII, Our venerated Predecessor of happy memory. We remember too, with particular satisfaction, the many pleasant occasions on which We received your honourable father.

Your Excellency now comes once again, this time as the President of that noble nation, the United States of America. We have visited your beautiful land, and as We travelled from one great city to another, We were able to experience personally the many admirable qualities which have made yours a leading member of the family of nations. The warm and sincere hospitality which was extended to Us wherever We went has left upon Us a lasting impression. The many churches that dot the American countryside and the spires reaching high over the cities are indicative of the spiritual awareness and convictions of your people. We witnessed the industry, the imagination and the dedication which have transformed the vast riches of your natural resources into a very high standard of living for your citizens. Nevertheless,, in the midst of this hard-won abundance, your country has not forgotten the high ideals of its first beginnings, nor neglected the poorer nations, and especially those new emerging states which are striving to give their people the benefits of freedom under law. At no little cost, the United States has extended to all of them a very generous helping hand. This sympathetic understanding and generosity cannot but generate a lasting friendship built of mutual respect and bring additional blessings upon the citizens of your land.

These past few years have seen impressive developments in the exploration of space to which the United States has made notable contributions. May these undertakings .take on a meaning of homage rendered to God, Creator and Supreme Lawmaker. Because they augur so much for the benefit of mankind, may they be indicative of true and peaceful progress which would bring men together in a closer relationship of universal brotherhood.

This is what We hear often in the discourses of Your Excellency, how with candor your words recall the higher moral principles of truth, of justice and of liberty. We find a spontaneous harmony with that which Our Venerable Predecessor, Pope John XXIII said in His last Encyclical Letter, «Pacem in Terris», when He presented anew to the world the Church's constant teaching on the dignity of the individual human person, a dignity which the Almighty Creator bestowed in creating man to His own image and likeness. We are ever mindful in Our prayers of the efforts to ensure to all your citizens the equal benefits of citizenship, which have as their foundation the equality of all men because of their dignity as persons and children of God.

The untiring striving to obtain world peace is to be commended highly, and We are confident that these labours will find a ready response in all men of good will. Universal peace in charity and justice can be achieved, and We feel that the efforts of the United States will bear fruit and help to secure for all peoples of this troubled world that peace which will enable them to prosper and to enjoy the blessings which God intends for them. To this end, following the example of Our Predecessors, We too are dedicating Our prayers, Our energies, and Our life.

We extend to you a heartfelt welcome, and through Your Excellency We wish to send Our greetings to Mrs. Kennedy, to your family and to all the citizens of your country, invoking upon them the abundant blessings of God.

*AAS 55 (1963), p.649-650.

Insegnamenti di Paolo VI, vol. I, p.35-37.

L' Osservatore Romano 3.7.1963, p.1.