



The Holy See

**MESSAGE OF POPE PAUL VI
TO THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL CHILDREN
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

Ash Wednesday, 12 February 1964

My dear Catholic school children.

Each year on Ash Wednesday, the Holy Father has taken the occasion to address you on the radio. We, as your new Holy Father, have this pleasure for the first time. It is a source of joy and happiness for Us to be able to speak to you in your own homes and schools, or wherever you are gathered to listen. That Our voice can reach you directly is a result of the progress of science, and one marvels at the most recent advances of modern technology which have brought so many benefits to mankind.

In this regard, the children of today and particularly you, who live in the United States of America, have many extraordinary advantages, permitting you not only to have all that is necessary to feed you and to clothe you properly, but also to enjoy a standard of living unknown before in history.

But this is not the case with all children everywhere. And the Holy Father, Who is the common Father of all, takes special interest in those less fortunate children who are undergoing many sufferings. The Pope worries about the little ones who go to bed at night hungry, or who have not sufficient clothes to protect them against the bitter cold of the winter or the heat of a tropical sun, or who may have no parents, or no homes at all, or worse still, who may have no country to call their own. The Holy Father's heart is further burdened with concern for those children who have recently suffered from disasters, for example, floods, earthquakes, hurricanes, and wars.

However, We are greatly comforted knowing that your own beloved Bishops have their own organization, Catholic Relief Services, through which they give assistance to these needy children. But this worthy program of world-wide relief is very expensive, and the Bishops need the whole-

hearted cooperation of their generous Catholic people in order to continue this noble work.

Therefore, We encourage you, dear Catholic school children, to make, in the spirit of Lent, your little sacrifices to bring aid and comfort to those in distress. You have been very generous in past years, so that much good has been accomplished, and We urge you once again to help your Bishops to aid these poor children of the world.

Most of you will be able to make some little contribution, even at the cost of overcoming your desire to buy something for yourselves that you may or may not really need. Some of you will not find it possible to make any offering. But, certainly all of you can join together by your prayers in asking Almighty God to further the work of your Bishops in assisting the less fortunate children of the world.

Confident that you will be ever mindful of your little friends everywhere, We invoke upon you, your good parents, your priests, the religious sisters and your teachers an abundance of heavenly blessings and, in pledge there of, We lovingly impart Our paternal Apostolic Benediction.