



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS PAUL VI
TO HIS MAJESTY MARGRETHE II, QUEEN OF DENMARK****

Friday, 11 November 1977

We are happy to welcome you, and we wish first of all to thank you for this visit that you have kindly paid us. It reminds us of the visit of your illustrious father, King Frederik IX.

For five years, Your Majesty has been on the throne of Denmark, and we know the esteem that the Danish people rightly has for you. We join in these sentiments, presenting to you our respectful homage and the fervent wishes we form for your Person, for the royal Family and for the success of your reign.

Our cordial greeting extends to your dear people. Peaceful and industrious in their work, your fellow-countrymen have succeeded in having access to a high level of life, on the civil, economic and social planes. We wish them happiness and prosperity. Your country has been able to take its place actively not only in the Nordic Council, in view of its affinity with Scandinavian countries, but also in the economic, cultural and political network of the European Communities and of the Council of Europe. Your Majesty is aware of the interest we take in the vitality of these institutions, seeing in them a chance of beneficial solidarity for the strengthening of peace, for the human progress of the member countries, for their common service of under-privileged regions and for the influence of their spiritual patrimony.

Spiritual progress is, in fact, at the centre of our concerns. And it is because of our universal mission in this field that we feel near to the Danish people. From its evangelization in the ninth century, Denmark has known great religious vitality, to which there bear witness in the Middle Ages, among other things, numerous monasteries and saints who deserve special mention: King Knud, Kjeld de Viborg, Fr William. Nearer us, in the seventeenth century, is Bishop Niels Stense, famous for his scientific culture and even more for his virtues. He acquired such a reputation for holiness that his cause for beatification has been introduced. Today Danish Catholics, although very few in number, are happy to live their faith in peace and to work with their brothers of the Lutheran confession in respect and promotion of religious values.

Christians are all bearers of a Message which aims in the first place at developing the relations of men with the living God. This can also greatly help contemporary society to go beyond the practical materialism in which it runs the risk of shutting itself up and sinking, losing hope. The Gospel gives men, in fact, the highest reasons for living, sharpens conscience, develops responsibility as regards justice, peace and love, in a word, it directs them towards a full humanism open to the Absolute, which causes all the goods of this world to be considered according to the real hierarchy of values.

Who would not desire this awakening or this spiritual and moral progress, which corresponds to the secret wish of mankind, inscribed in hearts by the Creator and revived by Jesus Christ, our Common Saviour? We believe that Your Majesty is sensitive to these intentions, since it is a question of the soul of your country, of its nobility.

The Catholic Church, trying to live these demands which are, in short, those of charity, intends to contribute on her part, with other believers and men of goodwill, to serving society better. She is happy to do so in Denmark in an atmosphere of religious freedom over which you watch.

We beg the Lord to assist Your Majesty in your very high office and to spread his Blessings on your Person and on the members of your suite, on those who collaborate with you for the common good of the country, and on the whole Danish people.

*ORa n.47 p.3.