



# The Holy See

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***RADIO MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS PIUS XII  
TO THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA  
AND TO THE ITALIAN PRISONERS\****

*Thursday, 3 August 1944*

We are speaking today for the first time to South Africa. Over sea and desert, over mountains and cataracts Our voice reaches out to you who dwell beneath the stars of the Southern Cross and it carries to all the sincere expression of Our paternal blessing and deep affection: to all, young and old, rich and poor; to those who are ill and suffering pain of body and to those whose souls are torn with anguish and sorrow for the dear ones who will never return to their place in the family circle; to the leaders of State and industry and to those whose hard labour and loyal cooperation are needed for the common good and progress of their country. May God, the all-powerful and loving Father of all, protect, guide and enrich you with His gifts, material and spiritual, so that prosperity and virtue and peace may bring happiness to your fire-sides and honour to your place among the peoples of the world.

But a century ago Africa was in great part an unknown, unexplored mystery; today no one is unaware of the rugged grandeur and wealth of the African continent and of your South Africa in particular: wealth of natural sources, of power that man has scarcely tapped, wealth of hidden treasures that the earth yields up to the strain and sweat of human labour; and that wealth, created by God for the good of all, is a promise of material prosperity that should enable each and everyone of your citizens to spend his life in conditions befitting his personal dignity as a man, and to rise to the fulfillment, with reasonable liberty, of that sum of permanent duties for which he is directly responsible to his Creator.

But to ensure and safeguard these antecedent and inalienable rights of the individual, there are social and economic problems to be solved, all the more grave in a complex society such as yours, and We are sure that your leaders in Church and State are determined to face them with enlightened courage and bring to their solution generous comprehension and patient study.

For wealth carries responsibilities, and national wealth carries national responsibilities. « The State has a noble function », We wrote in Our first Encyclical; « it is to regulate, assist and encourage all those private enterprises of the citizen which go to make up the national life and to direct them to a common end. But that end is not to be determined by any man's arbitrary will, nor may its primary norm be the mere material prosperity of civil society. It is determined by the obligation of aiding man towards the harmonious development of his natural powers and to the attainment of the perfection which is due to his nature. The State itself has been ordained by the Creator as a means and a protection for man in the pursuit of this end ».

And that end, that supreme destiny of man? Surely it is not confined within the narrow limits of this frail and fleeting life. « God has made us for Himself; and our heart will never be at peace until it rest in Him ». Those words of St. Augustine have formulated the conviction of the greatest minds of all ages, and really give voice to the profoundest and sincerest sentiment of every reasonable heart. Who does not know that unless life, be it the life of the individual or of the family or of the State, — unless life is regulated by the principles of justice and charity, there can be no real prosperity and happiness among men? And yet justice and charity that leave out God are like words written in the soft seasand. To pass over in silence the authority of God, just as if there were no God, or as if He cared nothing for His creatures or as if men, whether in their individual capacity or bound together by social relations, owed nothing to God, is to undermine the necessary props of morality and religion without which human society cannot hope to endure; it is a hostile attack at the very heart of a people.

And that is why We wish to take this opportunity of expressing Our deep sense of gratitude to the hundreds of priests and Religious Brothers and the almost five thousand Religious Sisters who are dedicating their lives to the Christian education of the rising generation. They are teaching the little ones to know and love and serve their God and Creator; they are instilling into their innocent hearts, impressing on their plastic minds a clear realization of man's duties in life; that he has a destiny quite apart from all the vicissitudes and human institutions of this world and nothing should make him swerve from the path that leads to it; that he must respect the rights of his fellow-man, be kind and helpful to him, for everyone of them, whatever his racial and social condition. shares with him the same, noble, eternal, God-given destiny; the young are taught to carry these principles of Christ out of their Catechism into their daily life at home and later into business and professional and political life. Then they will become a veritable bulwark and defence of the true greatness of the country they cherish as their own. This is the honour and happiness that We pray may come to you all, dearly beloved of South Africa.

Ed ora anche a voi, figli dilette, prigionieri italiani in cotesta estrema parte dell'immenso continente africano, vogliamo che pervenga paternamente affettuosa la Nostra parola di conforto e di speranza.

Lontani dal paese nativo e dal focolare desolato, voi sentite tutta l'amarezza del distacco,

aggravata dal prolungarsi di eventi, che hanno ritardato ancora il momento ardentemente atteso del ritorno. Ma la vostra fede avita vi insegna come dovete profittare di così dura prova per divenire cristiani sempre più ferventi, e vi discopre le altissime e provvidenziali finalità del dolore, il quale alla luce della fede si presenta come l'alleato di Dio, che ci educa, ci risana, ci redime, ci sublima, perché ci stringe sempre più al Signore, e ci stimola a renderci meritevoli del nostro eterno destino.

Vi esortiamo pertanto a perseverare nel bene e nella fedele osservanza dei doveri religiosi, affine di ottenere dall'Onnipotente che si degni di affrettare l'ora della liberazione, quando, ricongiunti con le vostre amate famiglie, nelle care chiese delle vostre terre, ove pregaste fanciulli e alle quali si volge con nostalgico ricordo il vostro cuore, voi scioglierete l'inno del ringraziamento nel vedere avverata la fiduciosa invocazione : Scenda la tua grazia, o Signore, su di noi, come noi l'attendiamo da Te (*Ps. 32, 22*). Là, rianimati e riconfortati al soffio della fede, voi coopererete a risollevarvi dalle rovine e a restaurare nella sua prosperità e grandezza, dopo tante sventure, la vostra patria, col rafforzamento di quei principi morali e religiosi, dai quali soltanto deriva la santità delle famiglie e la concorde collaborazione di tutti i cittadini al bene comune.

Con questo voto Noi impartiamo dalla pienezza del Nostro cuore paterno a voi, a tutti coloro che di voi hanno cura, ai vostri cari lontani, la Nostra Apostolica Benedizione.

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*\*Discorsi e Radiomessaggi di Sua Santità Pio XII, VI,*

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