



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS PIUS XII
TO THE OFFICERS OF THE UNITED STATES SPECIAL MISSION TO ITALY****

Tuesday, 18 January 1949

Honorable and Mrs. James Zellerbach,
Officers of the United States Special Mission to Italy!

It is a pleasure for Us to extend a welcome to so many distinguished American members of the Special Mission to Italy which forms part of the European Recovery Program. You are engaged in working out in detail a generous plan devised by Statesmen « against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos ».

We recognize the noble ideals inspiring these plans and for this reason We are prompted to speak to you. Our voice has been continuously raised for nearly ten years on behalf of the afflicted. We shall not cease to seek aid for the distressed and to praise and encourage others who are devoted to the same work.

It is evident to all that Europe could not be left completely abandoned after her terrible ordeal. You are cooperating in a plan to place her on a path of secure progress. But all external plans — no matter how well intentioned — must be considered to be of a temporary nature; their purpose should be animated with a sincere desire to help the nations of Europe to solve their own problems and decide their own destiny.

Your vast country, so rich in production and material wealth, has also shown its richness in designs and undertakings. And it has frequently been Our pleasant task to give unstinted praise to the true generosity of your fellow countrymen. How often have they demonstrated a genuine Christian charity in making real personal sacrifices on behalf of people who are suffering and in distress. Those who give, can understand the meaning of the phrase « it is more blessed to give than to receive »: assuredly, He Who rewards a cup of cold water given in His name will amply recompense the generous people of the United States of America.

For complete success of any work of relief or reconstruction, it is essential that you keep in mind the ultimate aim of such endeavours, which is not only to alleviate physical suffering and provide economic help, but by means of these to facilitate the spiritual life of men, to render it easier for them, with God's aid, to practise virtue and to lift up their hearts to their Heavenly Creator, the Author and Designer of all life.

May the blessing of Heaven be on each of you and on all who are dear to you. Our earnest prayers follow your activities and may God in His goodness bring your efforts to a happy issue.

**Discorsi e Radiomessaggi di Sua Santità Pio XII, X,*

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