



# The Holy See

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JOHN PAUL II

SOLEMNITY OF THE HOLY APOSTLES PETER AND PAUL

*ANGELUS*

Friday, 29 June 2001

*Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

1. Less than two days ago, I returned from *Ukraine* and today's *Angelus* gives me the opportunity to thank the Virgin Mary for the great gift of this Apostolic trip.

Visiting Ukraine, the historical bridge between the East and West, was for me a long-awaited goal, which I prepared for in prayer. Realizing it is further confirmation of a providential design: that the Church in Europe may begin to breathe again with its two lungs, so that the whole continent will experience a renewed evangelization.

The welcome from the Ukrainian faithful was truly warm and moving. I express my warm gratitude to all.

2. In the ecumenical spirit that marked the pilgrimage to Greece and the one just concluded, I am happy to welcome today to Rome the *Delegation of the Patriarchate of Constantinople*, which will attend the solemn Mass that will take place this evening at 6: 30 p.m. in the square in front of St Peter's Basilica. Welcome! The house of Peter welcomes you with esteem and affection.

With the same affection I greet *the 36 Metropolitan Archbishops* appointed in the course of the year, who will receive the Pallium during today's Mass.

My greetings are also extended to the numerous *Bishops appointed in the course of the year*, who have come to Rome to participate in the study days promoted by the Congregation for Bishops. I

sincerely hope that this pause close to the relics of the Apostles, will give them light and encouragement for a better exercise of their pastoral service.

3. We now turn to the Blessed Virgin Mary with the *Angelus* prayer. I pray with particular affection to the Virgin Mary for all Romans, on the feast of their holy Patrons. May their faith be strong, like Peter's, and rich in apostolic zeal, like Paul's. Only in this way, dear Christians of Rome, will you be the salt and light of this City, which will thus be able to continue to measure up to the height of its spiritual mission in the world, and, above all, in this significant phase of its history.

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