



The Holy See

**LETTER OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
FOR THE FIRST CENTENARY
OF SAINT PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL**

*To my venerable and dear Brother
Cardinal Terence Cooke
Archbishop of New York*

AS THE CHURCH in New York celebrates the centenary of Saint Patrick's Cathedral, it is a great joy for me to tell you of my spiritual closeness at this time. I am united with you and all the faithful in your prayer of praise and gratitude for the many graces bestowed over the course of a century in this house of God.

With you I offer thanks for the worship given to the Most Blessed Trinity during the past hundred years, as Jesus Christ, the same today as he was yesterday and as he will be for ever, has faithfully renewed, through the ministerial priesthood of his Church, his Sacrifice of love, associating in this oblation the entire People of God.

In this place of prayer, generations of Catholics have found solace and strength in the company of the Eucharistic Lord, rendering him the supreme homage of their adoration. In the confessionals, thousands of men, women and children have encountered Christ in his Sacrament of Reconciliation and have been filled with peace and joy. Here, by word and sacrament, the Lord Jesus has indeed communicated with his people, building and consolidating the community of believers, commissioning all of them to the apostolate of the Church, manifesting in some the covenant of his love through the Sacrament of Marriage, and sending forth others as priests to proclaim his Paschal Mystery. And through many sacred actions the Holy Spirit has stirred up in the hearts of the faithful abundant fruits of justice and holiness of life.

Through a special disposition of God's providence my beloved predecessor Paul VI came to Saint Patrick's Cathedral to adore the Blessed Sacrament, and from the sanctuary he proclaimed his message of peace, which reached to the ends of the earth. Here I myself twice had the great joy of celebrating the Sacrifice of the Mass.

On this happy occasion it is my earnest hope that the local ecclesial community, symbolized by this glorious edifice in stone, may be renewed in the faith of Peter and Paul – the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ – and that each one of you will find fresh vigor for authentic Christian living. I pray that, in this Church, the word of God, preached in all its purity and integrity, with all its exigencies and in all its power, will produce new marvels of grace for this generation and for generations to come.

I commend these hopes and prayers to Mary, Mother of God and Mother of the Church, asking her to sustain in generosity and joy all the clergy, religious and laity of New York. In the holy name of Jesus I send you my special Apostolic Blessing.

From the Vatican, March 25, 1979.

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