



# The Holy See

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## APOSTOLIC JOURNEY TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

### **ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II AT THE DEPARTURE FROM THE UNITED NATIONS\***

*New York*

*Tuesday, 2 October 1979*

*Mr. Secretary-General,*

As I am about to conclude my all too brief visit at the world Headquarters of the United Nations, I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to all who were instrumental in making this visit possible.

My thanks go first of all to you, Mr. Secretary-General, for your kind invitation, which I considered not only a great honour but also an obligation, since it allowed me by my presence here to attest publicly and solemnly to the commitment of the Holy See to collaborate, to the extent consonant with its own mission, with this worthy Organization.

My gratitude goes also to the distinguished President of the Thirty-fourth General Assembly, who honoured me in inviting me to address this unique forum of the delegates of nearly all the nations of the world. By proclaiming the incomparable dignity of every human being and by manifesting my firm belief in the unity and solidarity of all nations, I have been permitted to affirm once again a basic tenet of my Encyclical Letter: "After all, peace comes down to respect for man's inviolable rights" (*Redemptor Hominis*, 17).

May I also thank all the distinguished delegates of the nations represented here, as well as the whole Staff of the United Nations, for the friendly reception which they have given to the representatives of the Holy See, particularly to our Permanent Observer, Archbishop Giovanni Cheli.

The message which I wish to leave with you is a message of certitude and hope: the certitude that peace is possible when it is based on the recognition of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of all men; the hope that the sense of moral responsibility which every person must assume will make it possible to create a better world in freedom, in justice and in love.

As one whose ministry is void of meaning except insofar as he is the faithful Vicar of Christ on earth, I now take leave of you with the words of the one whom I represent, of Jesus Christ himself : "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you" (*Jn* 14 :27). My constant prayer for all of you is this : that there may be peace in justice and in love. May the praying voice of all those who believe in God—Christians and non-Christians alike—bring it about that the moral resources present in the hearts of men and women of good will be united for the common good, and call down from heaven that peace which human efforts alone cannot effect.

Maw God bless the United Nations.

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\*AAS 71 (1979), p. 1164-1165.

*L'Osservatore Romano* 4.10.1979 p.4.

*L'Osservatore Romano. Weekly Edition in English* n.42 p.13.

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