



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF POPE JOHN PAUL II
TO THE OFFICERS AND MEN
OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY***

Wednesday, 25 January 1984

Dear Friends,

I extend a cordial welcome to the Vatican to all of you today: the Officers and Men of the United States Navy stationed aboard the USS Kennedy. I have been informed of your service in the Middle East – a service performed in relation to the excruciating suffering that Lebanon is undergoing.

I know that what you have experienced as part of a Mission of Peace will have lasting effects in your own lives. You have been close to the evil of hatred and its worst expression, which is war. At the same time you have shared the dream of countless ordinary and upright people for peace and reconciliation, and for that harmony and brotherhood which transcend all diversity and differences.

Your own presence was intended to help create conditions to favour peace. Responding to an invitation of the Lebanese Government, you and Peace Force members from other countries endeavoured to offer the collaboration of peace to a war-torn zone.

And I am sure that your own desire to see peace and fraternal cooperation flourish will be confirmed here in Rome. For here you are witnesses, together with fellow pilgrims from all over the world, to the constructive power inherent in the unity of the one human family: the power to live together, to work together and together to look upwards to the God and Father of us all. Dear friends, may the fatherhood of God enable you to understand ever better the brotherhood of man and the harmony and love which must characterize all human relationships. And may God's love touch the hearts of all of you today.

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