



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
TO THE MEMBERS
OF THE "TOGETHER FOR PEACE" FOUNDATION**

*Consistory Hall
Monday, 22 May 1989*

Distinguished Members of the "Together for Peace" Foundation.

As women who hold significant positions within your own countries and in areas of international life, you have come together in support of the cause of peace and mutual understanding between peoples. I am pleased to welcome you to the Vatican this morning, during the course of your Seminar. May these days in Rome foster the friendship and cooperation which have already grown up between you, and strengthen you in your commitment to the noble goals of your Foundation.

Your Seminar is entitled "Women and Solidarity", and aims at a deeper understanding of the *role of women in the worldwide effort to bring aid* and encouragement to those who suffer or are in need of our help. In a world which is discovering more clearly every day the interdependence of all men and women and of all nations and peoples, you seek to explore the specific contribution which women can make to bringing about an era of authentic peace, based upon justice and respect for the dignity of each and every individual.

As you well know, all efforts to help our *brothers and sisters* in need must proceed from a deep desire to enable them *to attain their fullest human potential*, both as individuals and as members of society at large. This desire, which is fundamentally religious, and which has its source deep within the human heart, is an expression of the common humanity we share. Beyond all differences of language, culture and economic status, all of us are one, members of one family and responsible for one another. Whenever our common humanity is forgotten, or the dignity of one human person is prejudiced, all of us suffer, and each of us is somehow lessened.

In these days of study and reflection, may you come to a deeper understanding of the *spiritual dimension* of the work which you have undertaken. The very word “*solidarity*”, as it appears in the title of your Seminar, points to a profound spiritual truth, namely, that all contributions to the improvement of peoples and societies are rooted in a vision which both *recognizes a brother or sister in every human person and which inspires us to acknowledge our own personal responsibility for their good and for the good of all* (Cfr. Ioannis Pauli PP. II *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 38). As women, you bring unique gifts, insights and concerns to the world’s search for peace. People everywhere are yearning to experience true freedom and authentic human fulfilment, and the many women whose generosity and self-sacrifice you represent have an important and essential role to play. May all your efforts flow from a heart at peace and from a generous desire to share with others the gifts which you yourselves have received.

The Catholic Church greatly appreciates what you have done and are doing on behalf of the needy. I thank you, and invoke upon you all the blessings of him who is “the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation” (2Cor. 1, 3).

May God’s love accompany you always!

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