



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY TO POLAND AND HUNGARY

FAREWELL CEREMONY FROM HUNGARY

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II

Ferihegy International Airport (Budapest)

Tuesday, 20 August 1991

1. During my visit to Hungary I have been able to admire some of the fine results of the human and Christian life of the Nation. I have been able to admire the wealth of your historical traditions, here in the heart of Europe. I would have liked to visit all the places where Hungarians live, inside and outside the borders of your homeland. I would have wished personally to meet every Hungarian, in order to bring to each one the message of Christ, who is our life and who came to give us life in ever greater abundance. Every life is generated in pain and suffering.

Every life is nevertheless a gift of God. I have come to Hungary to thank God together with you for the opportunity he has given you to start a new life, to establish a new society based on justice and freedom.

2. In the effort to create a new life for society, there are two fundamental aspects which we must never forget.

The first. Life is not ours for our own sake alone; life is a common heritage and a common responsibility. We are called upon to build a new society, we must create a new human order in this country, in Europe, in the world, if we wish to enjoy during the next millennium a more genuine and happy life, a more human and Christian life.

The second. Although we need material things for our life, human happiness cannot be built on material well-being alone. It is true: you must devote yourselves to overcoming great economic difficulties and social problems. Justice can help you to distribute material goods in an honest way, but a happy and genuinely human society cannot be created except through righteousness, love

and forgiveness.

You are striving to build a new democratic society based on the rule of law and on justice. I would add: you will not be able to build that city unless you agree to live by the values of mercy and love.

3. Today we have celebrated the Feast of Saint Stephen, the first King and the first Saint of Hungary, who during his life successfully blended justice with mercy, human life with divine life, the law with love. We must follow the example he has left us; we must bear witness both to justice and to mercy, to the law as well as to love, in order to build in peace and solidarity a new Hungary and a new Europe.

4. I wish to express my deepest gratitude to all those who have welcomed me to this country.

In the first place I wish to thank you, Mr President, and all the State Authorities and all Hungarians. Hungary has always enjoyed a great reputation for the generous welcome it gives to visitors. The first houses for pilgrims were in fact built by Saint Stephen. I too have come as a pilgrim to this land, and I thank you for your hospitality. I have been able to appreciate the cooperation between the Authorities of the State and the Church, who have made my visit possible.

I make an urgent appeal to the State and the Church to combine their efforts in the service of the common good, in order to defend and promote human rights and the fundamental values without which no society can live, in order to create a new generation of men and women capable of using their freedom in a responsible way, and conscious that they will have to give an account of their deeds before their brothers and sisters and before God.

5. I wish to say a special word of thanks to you, Cardinal Paskai, and to all the Bishops, priests, Religious and laity of the Church in Hungary. Thank you for your sincere love and your fraternal hospitality. I carry back with me to Rome the memory of your faith which I have shared in the hope and love which Christ has given us.