



The Holy See

*Discours au Président de la République du MEXIQUE,
S.E.M. Carlos Salinas De GORTARI**

10 juillet 1991

Mr. President,

1. It gives me great satisfaction this morning to receive the Chief Executive of the Mexican nation, accompanied by the officials of his government. As I express my profound gratitude for this visit, I am pleased to respectfully greet you and cordially welcome you.

Your presence here reminds me, in a particular way, of the unforgettable pastoral visits to your country during which I was able to appreciate the genuine values, human and Christian, of the noble soul of Mexico, as well as the love your people profess for the Church and her pastors.

Mexico is a country that is distinguished for her culture, for her nobility of spirit, for her faith rooted in Christian ideals. You alluded to this in the cordial welcome you gave me – for which I retain a fond memory and deep gratitude – when I landed in Mexico a little more than a year ago. «Your arrival», you said on that occasion, «is an encounter with the generosity of a nation with many cultures, of many world views and deeply rooted religious sentiments» (Address of the President of Mexico, 6 May 1990).

2. We follow with particular interest, Mr. President, your resolute pledge, and that of your collaborators, to find a solution to the urgent problems that are troubling your country, and to lay the foundations allowing the establishment of a more just and participatory social order.

These problems constitute a challenge to the creative ability and to the will of Mexicans to understand. They are certainly grave and are not easily solved; but it is no reason for discouragement, since you are blessed with the greatest riches that a people can have: the solid human and Christian values that have shaped your existence as a nation and your living in

continual openness to hope. The Bishops of Mexico, who are so close to the legitimate aspirations and needs of their people, have repeatedly affirmed their will to support and to encourage all those initiatives which promote the common good and the development of individuals, of families and of society.

3. In your welcome to which I have referred, Your Excellency put particular stress on the ground of solidarity among all Mexicans for building a better future. As for this proposal, I wish to assure you, Mr. President, that in the Holy See and the Catholic Church you will always find an attentive partner, determined to collaborate – in virtue of her religious and moral mission – with the authorities and the diverse institutions of your country in favour of the supreme values and the spiritual and material prosperity of the nation. As I have had occasion to emphasize in my meeting with the Episcopal Conference of Mexico during my apostolic visit, it gives me great satisfaction to note the climate of dialogue and greater understanding between the Church and the civil authorities in Mexico (Address to the Mexican Bishops, 12 May 1990, n. 9). I earnestly hope that the positive elements, that are emerging, will be developed and later consolidated, in the necessary context of effective and legal freedom that the Church seeks in order to adequately complete her mission of evangelization. As the Second Vatican Council teaches, «the Church is universal in that she is not committed to any one culture or to any political, economic or social system. Hence she can be a very close bond between the various communities of men and nations, provided they have trust in the Church and guarantee her true freedom to carry out her mission» (Gaudium et spes, n. 42).

4. In a State of law, the full recognition of religious freedom is, at the same time the fruit and guarantee of the other civil freedoms. It is undeniable that the presence and activity of the Catholic communities in a notable way to the good of society, since many social problems, including those which are political, have roots in the moral order, where the educational activity and evangelization of the Church are brought about. Loyal collaboration between the Church and the State – through mutual respect and freedom – produces great goods for the whole Mexican society.

For the fulfilment of the ideals of solidarity among Mexicans it is necessary that the society it wants to build be stamped with the seal of moral and transcendent values, because they represent the strongest source of social cohesion. Actually, history shows that theoretical and practical systems that are closed to the transcendent end in divisions among men and make it impossible to obtain the level of progress which they desire to reach. I wanted to point this out in the recent encyclical *Centesimus annus*, high-lighting the deceit of the solutions proposed in Marxism and the phenomena of alienation which present a vision of the world and the individual based on only material well being (cf. n. 42).

It pleases me to note, Mr. President, the solid and constructive support that your government is giving to obtain a just and lasting solution to the situations of conflict and violence in Central America. This is a labour which certainly requires a great dose of good will, of wisdom and tenacity

on the part of all, but which has its recompense in being a useful tool on behalf of the supreme cause of peace.

Many of the present circumstances urgently demand not only that the individual Latin American conflicts and fights be resolved, but also that solid foundations be laid to obtain the desired integration of the peoples whom land, history faith and culture have united so strongly that you can justifiably say that they constitute a great Latin American family. I know that Mexico is among those countries that firmly support this process of integration of understanding according to the principles of solidarity, reciprocity and effective collaboration. I earnestly hope that this union of wills and efforts will give life to a more effective collaboration, in order to confront the serious problem of injustice and misery, and that at the same time it will favour the integral advancement of the human person, by protecting his rights and always respecting his dignity.

I want my message today to be of encouragement and hope, Mr. President. In this sense I desire to repeat the words that I spoke upon my arrival in Mexico for my recent pastoral visit: «(The Church), in carrying out her proper mission and with due respect for pluralism, reaffirms her vocation to serve the great causes of the human person as citizen and as child of God. The same principles which have shaped the life of the Mexican nation must infuse a firm hope and a new dynamism which can lead this great country to take the place that it should have in the international community» (Address of Holy Father upon arrival, 6 May 1990, n. 2).

Before concluding this meeting I would like to reiterate my satisfaction for your courteous visit, and pay homage to the Mexican people through you, while asking the Omnipotent to give you, your family and your collaborators many blessings. And so, like all the beloved sons of Mexico, you are always near the heart of the Pope.

**L'Osservatore Romano. Weekly Edition in English n.29 p.5.*

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