



The Holy See

MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II TO MEMBERS OF THE PAPAL FOUNDATION

*Your Eminences,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It gives me great pleasure to greet once more the *members of the Papal Foundation*, on your annual pilgrimage to Rome. During this holy season of Easter the whole Church celebrates the new life and renewed hope which is the risen Lord's gift to those who believe. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy gave us a new birth to a living hope through the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 *Petr.* 1, 3). It is this redemptive and transforming grace which I invoke upon you and your associates, in gratitude for what the Papal Foundation does to support the universal ministry of the Successor of Peter.

In order to fulfil the mission entrusted to her by the Lord himself, the Church depends on the active co-operation of her members who give their time and energies so that "Christ may be all in all" (Cfr. *Col.* 3, 11). This is precisely what the members of the Papal Foundation are doing in providing me with effective help in meeting situations of need in different parts of the world. Areas ravaged by human poverty and violence, places where the Church herself is just now emerging from persecution and suppression, as well as materially affluent societies which are suffering from spiritual impoverishment: all of these have been and continue to be direct beneficiaries of the annual grants made available by the Papal Foundation.

The whole Church is preparing to celebrate with intense participation the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000 and the beginning of a new Christian Millennium. Now as always, the clearest sign of the Church's vitality is the generous love with which her members open their hearts to their brothers and sisters.

Love is the soul and impulse of the new evangelization and of the mission *ad gentes* which

constitute the fundamental challenges of her pilgrimage towards God's Kingdom. As the Apostle Paul indicated, that love involves "good deeds" and "help", if it is to be fruitful (Cfr. *Tit.* 3, 14). My appreciation therefore of the Papal Foundation is not restricted to the practical benefits which result from your efforts, but is above all a sentiment of heartfelt gratitude for the evangelical spirit of self-giving love which animates your work.

In this same context, I cannot fail to express in a very special way my sentiments of personal gratitude to the late Cardinal John Krol. Not only was Cardinal Krol instrumental in establishing the Papal Foundation, but he also lent his able leadership, first as Chairman and then as President of the Foundation, watching over and encouraging its activities right up to the end of his life. Now that the Lord has called our dear Brother and friend back to himself, I know that you join me in praying that he will receive the reward of his labours, that he will "share his Master's joy" (Cfr. *Matth.* 25, 21.23).

My prayers are also for you, for your families and for all who contribute to the Foundation's important work: may your commitment to Christ and to the task of supporting the ministry of the Successor of Peter be strengthened and renewed at this season of life and grace. Commending you to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, I cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing.

From the Vatican, April 24, 1996.

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