



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER
POPE JOHN PAUL II
TO THE DELEGATION OF DIGNITARIES
FROM THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA**

22 May 1998

Dear Minister,

Gentlemen, The feast of Saints Cyril and Methodius has brought you once more on pilgrimage to Rome, the city privileged to preserve the relics of Saint Cyril. I am pleased to greet you as you come to pay homage to this co-Patron of Europe and to re-affirm your own commitment to the ideals of unity and solidarity which he and his brother so effectively embodied in their lives dedicated to the spreading of the Christian faith. In a very real way, the holy Brothers from Salonika are bridges between East and West, links connecting different cultures and traditions into one rich heritage for the good of the entire human family. They remain, for modern Europe and especially the Balkans, a compelling witness to the need for "reconciliation, friendly coexistence, human development and respect for the intrinsic dignity of every nation" (Encyclical Epistle *Slavorum Apostoli*, 1) — values which, on the threshold of the new Millennium, are more important than ever. The witness of their lives reveals the ageless truth that only in charity and justice can peace become a reality enfolding all human hearts, overcoming hatred and conquering evil with good. Dear friends, I pray that your pilgrimage will fill your minds and hearts with this peace, and I ask Almighty God to bless you and your fellow citizens with unity and good will.

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