



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER JOHN PAUL II
ON THE OCCASION OF THE JUBILEE YEAR PILGRIMAGE
OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA**

Saturday, 11 March 2000

*Dear Cardinal Bevilacqua,
Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,*

I am pleased to welcome you to Rome on the occasion of the Jubilee Year Pilgrimage of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Your visit to the Eternal City is undertaken, like every pilgrimage, in a spirit of prayer and a desire for interior renewal. Here in Rome you will venerate the tombs of the Apostles Peter and Paul and pray in the catacombs and the monuments which Christians in every age have erected to the memory of the martyrs and saints. I pray that this pilgrimage will help to deepen your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and increase your love for his Body, the Church.

As an important part of your Jubilee visit, you will pass through the Holy Door, symbolizing the conversion which must mark the life of every Christian. May this passage confirm your commitment to turn away from sin and to accept the gift of new life which the Lord constantly offers through the ministry of the Church. This is the great goal of the Jubilee year: to increase in the hearts of all the baptized "a true longing for holiness, a deep desire for conversion and personal renewal in a context of ever more intense prayer and solidarity with our neighbors, especially the most needy" (*Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, 32).

I commend you to Saints Peter and Paul, the holy patrons of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, to Saint John Neumann and to Blessed Katharine Drexel, whom I will shortly have the honor of canonizing. Upon you and your families I cordially invoke the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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