



# The Holy See

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**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II  
TO A DELEGATION  
FROM THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA  
FOR THE FEAST OF SAINTS CYRIL AND METHODIUS**

*Friday 25 May 2001*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Again this year, the visit of your Delegation for the Feast of Saints Cyril and Methodius gives me the opportunity to assure you of my prayers for the peace and security of your people. The mission of the two holy Brothers, the Apostles of the Slavs, has left indelible traces in the religious and cultural life of your nation. And your annual pilgrimage expresses your growing sense of how necessary their legacy is to the life of your own country and to Europe as a whole.

By the power of God's grace, the two Brothers of Salonika made a decisive and enduringly valid contribution to the building of Europe. Not only did they bring different peoples together in the bond of Christian communion, but they also brought cultural and civic unity to the lands where they worked. In recent times the peoples of the Balkans have known much suffering and fear, and I therefore feel obliged to recall the immediate and practical relevance of the teaching that Saints Cyril and Methodius have left behind. "Being Christians in our day means being builders of communion in the Church and in society. This calls for openness to others, mutual understanding, and readiness to cooperate through the generous exchange of cultural and spiritual resources" (*Slavorum Apostoli*, 27). Given the tensions and conflicts in your region, and the threat which they represent to individuals and to society, the path traced by Saints Cyril and Methodius remains as valid as ever.

In the Gospel values proclaimed by the holy Brothers, those now in positions of authority and responsible for the destiny of your region can find powerful inspiration in the search for a just and overall peace. May the God of all mercies bless you and your people with his love and protection.

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