



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO MR ION ILIESCU
PRESIDENT OF ROMANIA***

Thursday, 30 September 2004

Mr President,

I offer you a warm welcome and express my deep gratitude to you for your visit on the occasion of the inauguration at the Vatican Museums of an exhibition with the symbolic title, "*Stephen the Great, a bridge between East and West*".

Today's meeting affords me the opportunity to remember with emotion and gratitude the memorable [Visit that I had the joy of paying to Romania in 1999](#). A pilgrim of faith and hope, I was warmly and enthusiastically welcomed by you and by the State Authorities, by H.B. Patriarch Teoctist and by all the people of the venerable Orthodox Church of Romania. I received a particularly warm embrace from the Bishops and from the beloved Catholic communities of both Byzantine and Latin rites.

Mr President, I express to you, to your collaborators and to the entire Romanian Nation my affectionate good wishes for prosperity and peace. I accompany these wishes with my prayers, and invoke the Lord's Blessing upon everyone.

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