



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE JOHN XXIII
TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
DWIGHT EISENHOWER****

Sunday, 6 December 1959

The visit which you are kindly making to Us, Mr. President, as this year draws to a close, is for Us a motive of much satisfaction, which We desire to express to you from the depth of Our heart.

As We greet and welcome in Your Excellency the highest and most illustrious Representative of the great American Nation, We wish also to direct Our thoughts and Our greetings to your country; and We rejoice on seeing it striving so actively, under the guidance and impulse of its worthy President, towards the lofty ideals of a loyal and effective concord between nations.

The Catholic Church, Whose constant yearning is the establishment of true peace between peoples, cannot but greet with joy every sincere effort directed towards that end, and wish it the most consoling success.

We beg Your Excellency to discern in these words of Ours an expression of the sentiments of benevolence and admiration which We cherish for the American people; to them We extend also Our gratitude for the generosity with which they are promoting the welfare and progress of more needy peoples, by so liberally placing at their disposal the material gifts received from Divine Providence. At the same time, We express Our fervent good wishes for the prosperity of your people under the protection of Almighty God, and under the aegis of the noble traditions which they have inherited, and to which they owe their greatness and their prestige in the world.

In maintaining those traditions, which derive their vitality from spiritual values, We have no doubt that Your Excellency will continue to receive also from the Catholics of the United States an exemplary contribution of action, loyalty and discipline.

The sentiments and good wishes We have just expressed, We are glad to extend from Our heart to Your Excellency personally; and We earnestly invoke the powerful assistance of God upon you, in your noble efforts as the untiring servant of your people and of the cause of peace in the world.

In the distinguished group of persons accompanying Your Excellency, it is a pleasure to note the inclusion of your son, because of the happy and encouraging coincidence of the name «John», which he bears in common with Us.

The name «John», which in its biblical significance means «gift of God», expresses, in fact, confidence, joy and serene robustness.

Let this remark, of a confidential nature, inspired in Our mind by the presence of your son John and his wife, be regarded as a flower which We offer to Your Excellency, as an augury and an auspice of well-being and of celestial blessings for all the families of the noble American Nation.

*AAS 51 (1959), p.908-909.

Discorsi, Messaggi, Colloqui del Santo Padre Giovanni XXIII, vol. II, p.44-45.

L'Osservatore Romano 7-8.12.1959, p.1.