



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF POPE PAUL VI TO THE PILGRIMS FROM PHILADELPHIA

Tuesday, 25 June 1963

We are very happy to greet you, Our beloved children from the United States of America, who have made this long journey to see your venerated Bishop Neumann raised to the honours of the altar. We understand your keen disappointment upon learning of the postponement of the ceremony of beatification, which would have given to the world yet another example of heroic virtue nurtured on American soil. It will not be long before Bishop Neumann is numbered among the Blessed.

However, your visit to Rome should be a rich and unforgettable experience. All around you there are numerous monuments, reminders of the glories of the Church and her faithful. Here one can sense in a special way the unity and the agelessness of the Church. And here, at the tomb of St. Peter, we traverse centuries to return to the times of the Apostles, Peter and Paul. The lessons that one learns here are precious, and are an encouragement to imitate the heroic men and women venerated in the many churches of this Holy City.

You are the first group of Americans that We have met since Our election to the Chair of Peter. We ask you therefore to take back to all the citizens of the United States these Our first greetings. We have visited your noble country and We have experienced personally your sincere and warm hospitality and generosity. The industry of your people and the rich blessings of natural resources have made yours a prosperous land. In your abundance you have not forgotten the less fortunate peoples, and to them and to the new emerging nations you have given valuable assistance. The Catholics of the United States have been outstanding for their devoted loyalty to the Successors of St. Peter; they have been singularly generous to the Church and its missionary activity. Your young men and women are giving of their talents in every part of the world.

We are mindful, too, of our non-Catholic brothers, and upon them and their loved ones We invoke rich heavenly grace. To you, Venerable Brothers and beloved children, to your families and friends, and through you, to Our brother Bishops, clergy, religious and all the faithful of the United

States, We impart, in pledge of abundant heavenly blessings and assistance, Our special paternal Apostolic Benediction.

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