



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER PAUL VI
TO THE PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND
ON THE BICENTENARY ANNIVERSARY
OF THE DISCOVERY OF THEIR CONTINENT***

Saturday, 9 May 1970

Dear Friends from Australia and New Zealand,

We are grateful for the kind words just addressed to us by your spokesman, the Ambassador. We can assure you that it is indeed a great pleasure to be associated with you in the joy of your celebration.

The bicentenary anniversary of Captain Cook's coming to your countries and his extensive navigations and discoveries is understandably significant to all of you. Significant also is the two hundred year period of history that has subsequently elapsed, and presently leaves with you the challenges, problems and hopes of tomorrow.

It is fitting at this juncture of your history that you pause to raise your minds to the Creator of the world and Lord of history who "gives to all men life and health and everything" (*Act. 17: 25*). Your anniversary suggests indeed sentiments of thanksgiving to God for so many gifts received and for such lavish blessings. At the same time, it suggests humble prayer for the strength needed in the lives of your people.

On Our part, We wish to assure you on this occasion of Our oneness with you all. Australia and New Zealand may seem far away from Rome, but We want you to know that your beloved countries remain very close to Us. You are close in Our thoughts and in Our prayers. It will always be that way. In the Archives of the Vatican, there is an unsigned note that seems to date from between the years seventeen hundred and eighty and seventeen hundred and ninety. It speaks of the exploits of Captain Cook which you are now commemorating. Without making extensive

observations, We should at least like to look upon the presence of this document in the Vatican as an early indication of the Church's interest in your history. And We wish to assure you also that this interest is constant. It is manifested today and often in Our prayers.

We pray for your peace and prosperity. We pray that every man and woman who lives within your boundaries may experience ever more his human dignity and the greatness of his calling as a child of God. We pray that your countries, illumined by the Southern Cross, may continue to make their special contributions to mankind.

And finally, We invoke upon each and every one of you, and upon your dear ones, all choicest blessings from God.