



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER PAUL VI TO THE PATRIARCH OF JAPAN

Thursday, 29 November 1973

Venerable Sir,

We are happy today to welcome you here in our home. We greet you as the son of an illustrious and hard-working people, and also as the leader of a spiritual movement which exalts freedom and peace, and which is dedicated to a new life style, made up of respect, harmony and art.

There spring spontaneously from our heart the everlasting words of Christ Our Lord: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God" (*Matth. 5, 9*). We are glad therefore to meet you and to express our esteem and solidarity for that love of mankind, of peace and of art which is your honourable and distinguishing characteristic. We likewise rejoice when we recognize venerable and wise voices from the great religious traditions of Asia echoing forth in you with new-found strength and youth. The Catholic Church has sincere respect and admiration for those traditions.

Peace! We entertain only thoughts of peace. You know how often the call to peace has gone out from here, expressed by our great predecessors, and how peace has become for us a constant preoccupation to which we dedicate ourself each day. We have instituted a Day of Peace to be celebrated each year with our Brothers and our sons and daughters in the Faith, and each year we invite all men of good will to associate themselves with us.

From this you will realize how sincere and how heartfelt is our greeting and our gratitude to you, a teacher and a messenger of peace. We therefore cordially reiterate the greeting and prayer of Saint Paul the Apostle: "The God of peace be with you all" (*Rom. 15, 33*). May the Lord direct the hearts and thoughts of all men along the path of peace.

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