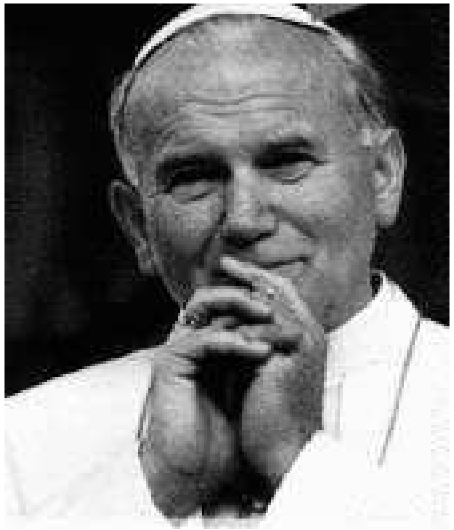
President Lincoln's question is no less a question for the present generation of Americans. Democracy cannot be sustained without a shared commitment to certain moral truths about the human person and human community. The basic question before a democratic society is: ''How ought we to live together?'' In seeking an answer to this question, can society exclude moral truth and moral reasoning? Can the Biblical wisdom which played such a formative part in the very founding of your country be excluded from that debate?

Would not doing so mean that tens of millions of Americans could no longer offer the contribution of their deepest convictions to the formation of public policy? Surely it is important for America that the moral truths which make freedom possible should be passed on to each new generation. Every generation of Americans needs to know that freedom consists not in doing what we like, but in having the right to do what we ought.

How appropriate is St. Paul's charge to Timothy! ''Guard the rich deposit of faith with the help of the Holy Spirit who dwells within us.'' That charge speaks to parents and teachers; it speaks in a special and urgent way to you, my brother bishops, successors of the apostles. Christ asks us to guard the truth because, as he promised us: ''You will know the truth and the truth will make you free.'' Depositum custodi! We must guard the truth that is the condition of authentic freedom, the truth that allows freedom to be fulfilled in goodness. We must guard the deposit of divine truth handed down to us in the church, especially in view of the challenges posed by a materialistic culture and by a permissive mentality that reduces freedom to license. But we bishops must do more than guard this truth. We must proclaim it, in season and out of season; we must celebrate it with God's people, in the sacraments; we must live it in charity and service; we must bear public witness to the truth that is Jesus Christ.

Dear brothers and sisters: Catholics of America! Always be guided by the truth - by the truth about God who created and redeemed us, and by the truth about the human person, made in the image and likeness of God and destined for a glorious fulfillment in the Kingdom to come. Always be convincing witnesses to the truth. ''Stir into a flame the gift of God'' that has been bestowed upon you in baptism. Light your nation - light the world - with the power of that flame! Amen.

Visit of Pope John Paul II to The United States
October 4-8, 1995



CATHOLICS UNITED FOR LIFE

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JESUS CHRIST VICTOR

Pope John Paul's Remarks at Airport

Wednesday, October 4, 1995

Mr. President, dear friends, dear people of America,

It is a great joy for me to return to the United States, as I had hoped to do last year. Thank you all for receiving me so warmly. This is a land of much generosity, and its people have always been quick to extend their hands in friendship and to offer hospitality. Thank you especially, President Clinton and the first lady, for coming here today in that same spirit.

For my part, I greet you and all the representatives of the federal, state and local governments. I greet the Bishops' Conference of the United States and the individual bishops who have invited me to their dioceses and have worked so hard, with countless co-workers, to prepare for this visit. I look forward to meeting the Catholic communities of Newark, Brooklyn, New York and Baltimore, as well as our brothers and sisters of other Christian Churches and Ecclesial Communities. To the members of the Jewish faith I extend a very cordial greeting and my respectful best wishes on this day of special significance for them.

I greet all the people of this great nation, of every race, color, creed, and social condition. I pray for you all and assure you of my profound esteem. Exactly 30 years ago today my

predecessor, Pope Paul VI, spoke to the United Nations General Assembly and delivered a message that still resounds in many hearts. "No more war, war never again!" He went on to appeal: "Peace, it is peace which must guide the destinies of people."

I too come as a pilgrim of peace and understanding among peoples. Tomorrow, in observance of the United Nations' 50th anniversary, I shall return there to express my deep conviction that the ideals and intentions which gave origin to that worldwide organization half a century ago are more indispensable than ever in a world searching for purpose.

The world, in fact, is undergoing a profound transformation. Opportunities for justice, reconciliation and development are visible in parts of the world where they were hardly discernible even a few years ago - almost within our reach, it seems, but still so difficult to grasp. Ancient rivalries and suspicions still compromise the cause of peace. We must find ways to set them aside. If we do not, history and the Lord of history will judge us harshly. Especially since the events of 1989, the role of the United States in the world has taken on a new prominence. Your widespread influence is at once political, economic, military and, due to your communications media, cultural. It is vital for the human family that in continuing to seek advancement in many different fields science, business, education and art, and wherever else your creativity leads you - America keeps compassion, generosity and concern for others at the very heart of its efforts.

In particular, for nations and peoples emerging from a long period of trial, your country stands upon the world scene as a model of a democratic society at an advanced stage of development. Your power of example carries with it heavy responsibilities. Use it well, America! Be an example of justice and civic virtue, freedom fulfilled in goodness, at home and abroad! From its beginning until now, the United States has been a haven for generation after generation of new arrivals. Men, women and children have streamed here from every corner of the globe, building new lives and forming a society of rich ethnic and racial diversity, based on commitment to a shared vision of human dignity and freedom. Of the United States we can truly say, "E pluribus unum."

It is my prayerful hope that America will persevere in its own best traditions of openness and opportunity. It would indeed

than liberating. We too can ‘‘harden our hearts.’’ And yet the prophet gives us an answer to our impatience: ‘‘If God delays, wait for him; he will surely come, he will not be late.’’ A Polish proverb expresses the same conviction in another way: ‘‘God takes his time, but he is just.’’ ... (Remarks in another language, then English translation): Our waiting for God is never in vain.

Every moment is our opportunity to model ourselves on Jesus Christ - to allow the power of the Gospel to transform our personal lives and our service to others, according to the spirit of the Beatitudes. ‘‘Bear your share of the hardship which the gospel entails,’’ writes Paul to Timothy in today’s second reading. This is no idle exhortation to endurance. No, it is an invitation to enter more deeply into the Christian vocation which belongs to us all by Baptism. There is no evil to be faced that Christ does not face with us. There is no enemy that Christ has not already conquered. There is no cross to bear that Christ has not already borne for us, and does not now bear with us. And on the far side of every cross we find the newness of life in the Holy Spirit, that new life which will reach its fulfillment in the resurrection. This is our faith. This is our witness before the world.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ: ‘‘The spirit God has given us is no cowardly spirit. ... Therefore, never be ashamed of your testimony to our Lord.’’

Thus wrote St. Paul to Timothy, almost 2,000 years ago; thus speaks the church to American Catholics today. Christian witness takes different forms at different moments in the life of a nation. Sometimes, witnessing to Christ will mean drawing out of a culture the full meaning of its noblest intentions, a fullness that is revealed in Christ. At other times, witnessing to Christ means challenging that culture, especially when the truth about the human person is under assault. America has always wanted to be a land of the free. Today, the challenge facing America is to find freedom’s fulfillment in the truth: the truth that is intrinsic to human life created in God’s image and likeness, the truth that is written on the human heart, the truth that can be known by reason and can therefore form the basis of a profound and universal dialogue among people about the direction they must give to their lives and their activities.

One hundred thirty years ago, President Abraham Lincoln asked whether a nation ‘‘conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal’’ could ‘‘long endure.’’

not a private opinion, a remote spiritual ideal, or a mere program for personal growth. The Gospel is the power which can transform the world! The Gospel is no abstraction: it is the living person of Jesus Christ, the word of God, the reflection of the Father's glory, the Incarnate Son who reveals the deepest meaning of our humanity and the noble destiny to which the whole human family is called. Christ has commanded us to let the light of the Gospel shine forth in our service to society. How can we profess faith in God's word, and then refuse to let it inspire and direct our thinking, our activity, our decisions, and our responsibilities towards one another?

In America, Christian faith has found expression in an impressive array of witnesses and achievements. We must recall with gratitude the inspiring work of education carried out in countless families, schools and universities, and all the healing and consolation imparted in hospitals and hospices and shelters. We must give thanks for the practical living out of God's call in devoted service to others, in commitment to social justice, in responsible involvement in political life, in a wide variety of charitable and social organizations, and in the growth of ecumenical and interreligious understanding and cooperation.

In a more global context, we should thank God for the great generosity of American Catholics whose support of the foreign missions has greatly contributed to the spiritual and material well-being of their brothers and sisters in other lands. The Church in the United States has sent brave missionary men and women out to the nations, and not a few of them have borne the ultimate witness to the ancient truth that the blood of martyrs is the seed of Christianity. In my visits to Catholic communities around the world I often meet American missionaries, lay, religious and priests. I wish to make an appeal to young Catholics to consider the missionary vocation. I know that the ''spirit of Denver'' is alive in many young hearts.

Today, though, some Catholics are tempted to discouragement or disillusionment, like the prophet Habakkuk in the first reading. They are tempted to cry out to the Lord in a different way: why does God not intervene when violence threatens his people; why does God let us see ruin and misery; why does God permit evil? Like the prophet Habakkuk, and like the thirsty Israelites in the desert at Meribah and Massah, our trust can falter; we can lose patience with God. In the drama of history, we can find our dependence upon God burdensome rather

be sad if the United States were to turn away from that enterprising spirit which has always sought the most practical and responsible ways of continuing to share with others the blessings God has richly bestowed here.

The same spirit of creative generosity will help you to meet the needs of your own poor and disadvantaged. They too have a role to play in building a society truly worthy of the human person - a society in which none are so poor that they have nothing to give and none are so rich that they have nothing to receive. The poor have needs which are not only material and economic, but also involve liberating their potential to work out their own destiny and to provide for the well- being of their families and communities. America will continue to be a land of promise as long as it remains a land of freedom and justice for all. Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen: I come as one who has an abiding hope in America's noble destiny. I thank God for allowing me to return to you again. Thank you and God bless you all! Thank you very much.

The Pope is bringing you rain - a very important event.

Thank you very much.

Pope John Paul II at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Newark
Wednesday, October 4, 1995

Dear Archbishop McCarrick and my brother cardinals and bishops, ear brother priests, ear seminarians, men and women religious and lay faithful of the family of the family of God which is the hurch in Newark:

We are gathered in this cathedral dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in order to give thanks to the Most Blessed Trinity for the bonds of faith and love which unite us in the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

The presence of the President of the United States at this evening prayer helps us call to mind that it is precisely our service of God which inspires and motivates the healthy pride which we all feel in our native land. This evening, let us thank God for the extraordinary human epic that is the United States of America.

This magnificent building stands in the heart of Newark as a

powerful reminder of God's steadfast love for his people and a sign of faith in Christ, our hope of glory. The athedral made of stone is a symbol of the living hurch, God's household, which is open to everyone without exception, to men and women of every race and tongue, of every people and nation. You - the people of God in Newark and throughout New Jersey - are the living stones which make up the Body of Christ in the midst of your city and state. Wherever you are - in your families, neighborhoods, places of work or recreation - you are called to build up the hurch in faith, hope and love.

The stirring challenge of the new evangelization - the aim of which is to proclaim that Jesus Christ is the center of history, the hope of humanity and the joy of every heart - was faced by the last year's Archdiocesan Synod. I greet with affection all of you who so zealously took part as delegates in that important assembly. The Synod wisely called for a great mobilization of resources so that all Catholics would receive the solid spiritual and doctrinal formation needed in order to bear convincing witness to their faith and assume their full role in the hurch's mission. I pray that, as a result of the Synod, the Archdiocese of Newark will become ever more of one heart and one mind - a community joyously united with its bishops and priests in attentively listening to the word of God, devoutly celebrating the sacraments and generously meeting the needs of others.

With special affection, I greet my brothers in the priesthood and thank each one of you for your dedicated service of the Gospel! The Lord has chosen you to be in the forefront in bringing souls to him. Like Christ, the Head and Shepherd of the hurch, you must know, tend and offer your life for your flock. Ordination configures you to Christ the Servant - to Him who humbly washed His apostles' feet because e came among us not to be served but to serve. Such selfless service is the model of all ministry in the hurch. As you return to your parishes or to the various apostolates in which you are engaged, I pray that - in the words of Saint Paul - God will make you worthy of his call, and fulfill by his power every honest intention and work of faith.

To the seminarians - and how heartening it is to know that your number is increasing! - I offer a special word of encouragement. The new evangelization of America calls for a great spiritual maturity on your part. The gift of the priesthood demands that you follow Christ even unto death on a cross. Without the virtues of self-discipline, diligent contemplation of

Cardinal Keeler, and thank him for his sensitive leadership in this local church and his work on behalf of the bishops' conference. With esteem I greet the other cardinals and bishops present here in great numbers, the priests, deacons and seminarians, the women and men religious, and all God's people, the ‘‘living stones'' whom the spirit uses to build up the body of Christ. I gladly greet the members of the various Christian churches and ecclesial communities. I assure them of the Catholic church's ardent desire to celebrate the jubilee of the year 2000 as a great occasion to move closer to overcoming the divisions of the second millennium. I thank the civil authorities who have wished to share this sacred moment with us.

(Remarks in Castilian, followed by this English translation) ... I greet the Spanish-speaking faithful present here and all those following this Mass on radio or television. The church is your spiritual home. Your parishes, associations, schools and religious education programs need your cooperation and the enthusiasm of your faith. With special affection, I encourage you to transmit your Catholic traditions to the younger generations.

Our celebration today speaks to us, speaks to us not only of the past. The eucharist always makes present anew the saving mystery of Christ's death and resurrection, and points to the future definitive fulfillment of God's plan of salvation. Two years ago, at Denver, I was deeply impressed by the vitality of America's young people as they bore enthusiastic witness to their love of Christ, and showed that they were not afraid of the demands of the Gospel. Today, I offer this Mass for a strengthening of that vitality and Christian courage at every level of the church in the United States: among the laity, among the priests and religious, among my brother bishops. The whole church is preparing for the third Christian millennium. The challenge of the great jubilee of the year 2000 is the new evangelization: a deepening of faith and a vigorous response to the Christian vocation to holiness and service. This is what the successor of Peter has come to Baltimore to urge upon each one of you: the courage to bear witness to the gospel of our redemption.

In today's Gospel reading, the apostles ask Jesus: ‘‘Increase our faith.'' This must be our constant prayer. Faith is always demanding, because faith leads us beyond ourselves. It leads us directly to God. Faith also imparts a vision of life's purpose and stimulates us to action. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is

that you gave the pope his Christmas present in October, in New York, in Central Park. Do not be afraid! The power of the Holy Spirit is with you! Is with you! Amen.

Pope John Paul II's Homily at Camden Yards, Baltimore
Sunday, October 8, 1995

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Each day, the church begins the Liturgy of the Hours with the psalm which we have just prayed together: "Come, let us sing joyfully to the Lord." In that call, ringing down the centuries and echoing across the face of the globe, the psalmist summons the people of God to sing the praises of the Lord and to bear great witness to the marvelous things God has done for us.

The psalmist's call to hear the Lord's voice has particular significance for us as we celebrate this Mass in Baltimore. Maryland was the birthplace of the church in colonial America. More than 360 years ago, a small band of Catholics came to the New World to build a home where they could ‘‘sing joyfully to the Lord’’ in freedom. They established a colony whose hallmark was religious tolerance, which would later become one of the cultural cornerstones of American democracy. Baltimore is the senior metropolitan See in the United States. Its first bishop, John Carroll, stands out as a model who can still inspire the church in America today. Here were held the great provincial and plenary councils which guided the church's expansion as waves of immigrants came to these shores in search of a better life.

Here in Baltimore, in 1884, the bishops of the United States authorized the ‘‘Baltimore Catechism,’’ which formed the faith of tens of millions of Catholics for decades. In Baltimore, the country's Catholic school system began under the leadership of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton. The first seminary in the United States was established here, under the protection of the virgin mother of God, as was America's first Catholic college for women. Since those heroic beginnings, men and women of every race and social class have built the Catholic community we see in America today, a great spiritual movement of witness, of apostolate, of good works, of Catholic institutions and organizations.

With warm affection, therefore, I greet your archbishop,

the truth, simplicity of life and joyful dedication to others, you will not have the inner strength to combat the culture of death which is threatening the modern world. I urge you to pray each day: O good Jesus, make a priest like unto your own heart. Christ himself is your inheritance. He will never abandon you or disappoint you!

With profound gratitude for your immense contribution to the hurch's life, I embrace all the men and women religious. Whether your life is hidden with Christ in God in solitude, penance and contemplation, or whether you are actively engaged in the world, the whole ecclesial community looks to you to see what it means to love the Lord with an undivided heart. The recognition of the genius of woman and of the specifically feminine charisms which women religious bring to the Church's life and mission is a providential sign of our times. If in the past these gifts were sometimes insufficiently esteemed or thwarted in their legitimate expression, now is the time for all of us to work together to follow where the Lord leads, in love and fidelity. May the Holy Spirit strengthen your hearts, making them blameless and holy before our God and Father, so that you may serve his people with ever greater joy To the whole hurch in Newark and New Jersey I repeat the words of encouragement found in the First Letter of Peter: "There is cause for rejoicing here ... because you are achieving faith's goal, your salvation."

Dear friends in Christ, the First Letter of Peter exhorts us to be clothed with humility in our dealings with one another; we read: "Bow humbly under God's mighty hand, so that in due time he may lift you high." This lowliness and humility is explained as abandoning ourselves into the hands of God: "Cast all your cares on him because he cares for you." Yes, God holds humanity in the highest esteem! God reveres everything that is authentically human - everything that affects individuals and societies, nations and states!

As you well know, I have come to the United States in connection with the 50th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. That organization exists to serve the common good of the human family, and therefore it is fitting that the Pope speak there as a witness to the hope of the Gospel. The United Nations is an instrument of dialogue and peace. The criteria of its actions ought always to be the integral well-being of people. The challenge which is permanently before its member states, agencies and personnel is similar to the challenge which

confronts every individual: In your relations with one another, clothe yourselves with humility. In particular, the powerful and the mighty ought to show meekness in their dealings with the weak. The powerful always need to remember that they owe their position to God - to the One who is stern with the arrogant but who shows kindness to the humble. Nations and governments - like individuals - need to acknowledge that the Lord rules the world with justice; with fairness he rules the peoples and guides the nations.

The First Letter of Peter also recalls the need for watchfulness: "Stay sober and alert." Fifty years ago, after the end of the incredible destruction caused by the Second World War, the United Nations rganization was established as an international forum of vigilance at the service of peace and justice in the world. The United Nations has a necessary role to play in preventing and relieving the enormous sufferings which the world's peoples and nations inflict on each other, sufferings which in the 20th century have reached unprecedented proportions in wars and conflicts and in political and ideological oppression caused by the greed and arrogance of those who plot evil in their hearts.

The history of the world in the last 50 years cannot be written without reference to the United Nations. Is it not still needed, to watch and warn and exhort when conflict and injustice threaten the tranquillity of order? Should it not be strengthened as the guarantor of peace, justice and humanitarian concern - whether in the Balkans, in Africa, or in any place where these values are threatened? Should it not be reformed to insure that it will be guided by an objective assessment of the international situation in order to be a credible forum in which to address issues of fundamental importance for the building of a more human and just world?

Our prayer for peace is therefore also a prayer for the United Nations rganization. Saint Francis of Assisi, whose feast we celebrate today, shines forth as a great lover and artisan of peace. Let us invoke his intercession upon the United Nations' work for justice and peace throughout the world.

May the God of all grace, who has called us to everlasting glory in Christ, confirm and strengthen all who work and suffer for the peace and well-being of the human family.

To Him we commend the hurch in the United States and

because to know and love him will truly change our lives.

I remember a song I used to sing in Poland as a young man, a song which I still sing as Pope, which tells about the birth of the Savior. On Christmas night, in every church and chapel, this song would ring out, repeating in a musical way the story told in the Gospel.

It says: "In the silence of the night, a voice is heard: 'Get up, shepherds, God is born for you! Hurry to Bethlehem to meet the Lord."'

The same story is told in the beautiful hymn, "Silent Night," which everyone knows. That is a hymn which moves us deeply by reminding us that Jesus, the Son of God, was born of Mary, born to make us holy and to make us adopted sons and daughters of God. It is a hymn to the creative power of the Holy Spirit. It is a song to help us not to be afraid.

If I speak of Christmas, it is because in less than five years we shall reach the end of the second millennium, 2,000 years since the birth of Christ on that first Christmas night in Bethlehem. We must allow the Holy Spirit to prepare us for this important event, which is another significant stage of his passage through history and of our pilgrimage of faith.

Your archbishop, Cardinal O'Connor, has given me the welcome news that the church in New York will begin to prepare for the millennium by declaring 1996 a Year of Evangelization. What a wonderful beginning, to make a mighty year-long effort to transmit the teaching and the love of Christ to all who will listen, especially to those who, for some reason, may have wandered away or been alienated from the church. Cardinal O'Connor will need all of you, and especially you young people, to help the Church enter the third millennium. You young people will live most of your lives in the next millennium. You must help the Holy Spirit to shape its social, moral and spiritual character. You must transmit your joy in being adopted sons and daughters of God through the creative power of the Holy Spirit. Do this with the help of Mary, Mother of Jesus. Cling to her rosary, and you will never wander far from her side.

The pope is speaking to all of you, not only the young people. The pope asks you to do this. The pope knows that you will do this, and for this he loves you. Then you can tell the whole world

my Lord should come to me? The moment your greeting sounded in my ears, the baby leapt for joy." That infant was John the Baptist, the greatest of the prophets, the one who would proclaim Jesus at the beginning of his public life. Then Mary uttered the words of the beautiful hymn of gratitude and praise, the Magnificat: "My being proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit finds joy in God my savior." Down the ages the church repeats the Magnificat every day in what we call the Liturgy of the Hours. Perhaps the most important words of this wonderful hymn are: "God who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name."

Like Mary, you must not be afraid to allow the Holy Spirit to help you become intimate friends of Christ. Like Mary, you must put aside any fear, in order to take Christ to the world in whatever you do in marriage, as single people in the world, as students, as workers, as professional people. Christ wants to go to many places in the world, and to enter many hearts, through you. Just as Mary visited Elizabeth, so you too are called to "visit" the needs of the poor, the hungry, the homeless, those who are alone or ill; for example those suffering from AIDS. You are called to stand up for life! You are called to respect and defend the mystery of life always and everywhere, including the lives of unborn babies, giving real help and encouragement to mothers in difficult situations. You are called to work and pray against abortion, against violence of all kinds, including the violence done against women's and children's dignity through pornography. Stand up for the life of the aged and the handicapped, against attempts to promote assisted suicide and euthanasia! Stand up for marriage and family life! Stand up for purity! Resist the pressures and temptations of a world that too often tries to ignore a most fundamental truth: that every life is a gift from God our Creator, and that we must give an account to God of how we use it either for good or evil.

There is yet another stage of the Holy Spirit's passage through history which we should meditate on: the third joyful mystery of the rosary, the birth of the Son of God, announced by angels to the shepherds. "You have nothing to fear. ... This day in David's city a savior has been born to you. ... In a manger you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes." St. Luke tells us that the shepherds said to one another: "Let us go over and see this Child." And they went and found the Child with Mary and Joseph. That is what we too must do! We must go to this Child, this Man, the Son of God, at whatever inconvenience, at whatever risk to ourselves,

the local hurch of Newark and the surrounding dioceses. To Him be honor, glory and praise forever! Amen.

Pope John Paul II Speech to the General Assembly
Wednesday, October 5, 1995

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honor for me to have the opportunity to address this international assembly and to join the men and women of every country, race, language and culture in celebrating the 50th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations Organization.

In coming before this distinguished assembly, I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude in the first place to the secretary-general, Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for having warmly encouraged this visit. And I thank you, Mr. President, for your cordial welcome. I greet all of you, the members of this General Assembly: I am grateful for your presence and for your kind attention.

Ladies and gentlemen! On the threshold of a new millennium, we are witnessing an extraordinary global acceleration of that quest for freedom which is one of the great dynamics of human history. This phenomenon is not limited to any one part of the world; nor is it the expression of any single culture. Men and women throughout the world, even when threatened by violence, have taken the risk of freedom, asking to be given a place in social, political, and economic life which is commensurate with their dignity as free human beings. This universal longing for freedom is truly one of the distinguishing marks of our time.

It is important for us to grasp what might be called the inner structure of this worldwide movement. It is precisely its global character which offers us its first and fundamental "key" and confirms that there are indeed universal human rights, rooted in the nature of the person, rights which reflect the objective and inviolable demands of a universal moral law.

These are not abstract points; rather, these rights tell us something important about the actual life of every individual and of every social group. They also remind us that we do not live in an irrational or meaningless world. On the contrary, there is a moral logic which is built into human life and which makes possible dialogue between individuals and peoples. If we want a century of violent coercion to be succeeded by a century of

persuasion, we must find a way to discuss the human future intelligibly. The universal moral law written on the human heart is precisely that kind of ‘‘grammar’’ which is needed if the world is to engage this discussion of its future.

The moral dynamics of this universal quest for freedom clearly appeared in Central and Eastern Europe during the nonviolent revolutions of 1989. Unfolding in specific times and places, those historical events nonetheless taught a lesson which goes far beyond a specific geographical location. For the nonviolent revolutions of 1989 demonstrated that the quest for freedom cannot be suppressed. It arises from a recognition of the inestimable dignity and value of the human person, and it cannot fail to be accompanied by a commitment on behalf of the human person. Modern totalitarianism has been, first and foremost, an assault on the dignity of the person, an assault which has gone even to the point of denying the inalienable value of the individual’s life.

The revolutions of 1989 were made possible by the commitment of brave men and women inspired by a different, and ultimately more profound and powerful, vision: the vision of man as a creature of intelligence and free will, immersed in a mystery which transcends his own being and endowed with the ability to reflect and the ability to choose - and thus capable of wisdom and virtue. A decisive factor in the success of those nonviolent revolutions was the experience of social solidarity: In the face of regimes backed by the power of propaganda and terror, that solidarity was the moral core of the - power of the powerless, a beacon of hope and an enduring reminder that it is possible for man’s historical journey to follow a path which is true to the finest aspirations of the human spirit.

The quest for freedom in the second half of the twentieth century has engaged not only individuals but nations as well. Fifty years after the end of the Second World War, it is important to remember that war was fought because of violations of the rights of nations.

Unfortunately, even after the end of the Second World War, the rights of nations continued to be violated. To take but one set of examples, the Baltic States and extensive territories in Ukraine and Belarus were absorbed into the Soviet Union, as had already happened to Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia in the Caucasus. At the same time the so-called ‘‘People’s Democracies’’ of

said, "Do not fear, Mary. For you have found favor with God." It is the power of the Most High that will come upon you, and by the power of the Holy Spirit you will become the mother of the Son of God. If the creative power of God is at work at the moment of conception of every human being, in the Annunciation the Spirit accomplished something incomparably greater. In the womb of the Virgin Mary the Spirit created a man, to be born nine months later in Bethlehem, who, from the first moment of his conception, was the eternal Son of the Father, the Word through whom all things visible and invisible were made — Eternal Wisdom, the Archetype of everything that exists in creation.

When Mary realized who it was that was calling her, all fear was banished and she replied: "I am the servant of the Lord. Let it be done to me as you say." And at that instant, she became the mother of the Son of God. This is the extraordinary truth that we meditate on in the first mystery of the rosary, the Annunciation. All this happened so that, as St. Paul says, we might be redeemed and might receive adoption as God’s sons and daughters. In Christ, the Holy Spirit makes us God’s beloved children. The incarnation of the Son of God happened once, and is unrepeatable. Divine adoption goes on all the time, through the Church, the Body of Christ, and particularly through the sacraments, through baptism, penance, the Eucharist, and of course the sacrament of pentecost that we call confirmation. And then St. Paul writes something very striking: The proof that we are God’s children is that he "has sent forth into our hearts the Spirit of his Son, which cries out ‘Abba!"’ Abba! Father! This is our prayer every time we say the Our Father. But we have to say it in the Spirit, with a clear awareness that in Christ "we are no longer slaves but children, and therefore heirs with Christ to his kingdom." This new condition of ours as Christians, that is, our transformation through grace and our sharing in divine life itself, will reach its fulfillment in eternity. Then we shall share the happiness with which God himself is happy, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Do you see how important it is to invoke the Holy Spirit and to allow him to work in us? We must remember that the Holy Spirit can do great things for us! And the Holy Spirit does great things for us every day.

The next stage of the Holy Spirit’s passage is the joyful mystery of the Visitation. Moved by the Holy Spirit, who banished her fear, and filled with love for her cousin Elizabeth, who was an older woman and pregnant, Mary immediately left the security of her own home and went to help Elizabeth. Imagine Mary’s surprise to hear her cousin say, "But who am I that the mother of

last January, millions of young people gathered to meditate on how that new life in the Holy Spirit makes us apostles of Christ’s kingdom: "As the Father has sent me, so am I sending you." And now, today, here in Central Park we are continuing the same spiritual pilgrimage, getting ready for the next World Youth Day, in Paris in 1997. I am very grateful for all that is being done in parishes and dioceses all over the world to bring young people into the spirit of this great spiritual pilgrimage across the world, which started in Rome in 1984, then brought us to Buenos Aires in Argentina, to Santiago de Compostela in Spain, to Jasna Gora and Czestochowa in Poland, to Denver, to Manila, and next to Paris. At the ecumenical level, a similar spiritual pilgrimage is made at Taizi in France. The driving force of all this movement of young people is always the Holy Spirit.

I invite you to reflect on what makes each one of you truly marvelous and unique. Only a human being like you can think and speak and share your thoughts in different languages with other human beings all over the world, and through that language express the beauty of art and poetry and music and literature and the theater, and so many other uniquely human accomplishments. And most important of all, only God’s precious human beings are capable of loving. Love makes us seek what is good; love makes us better persons. It is love that prompts men and women to marry and form a family, to have children. It is love that prompts others to embrace the religious life or become priests. Love makes you reach out to others in need, whoever they are, wherever they are. Every genuine human love is a reflection of the love that is God himself, to the point where the first letter of St. John says: "The man without love has known nothing of God; for God is love."

Today is the feast of the holy rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The readings of the Mass introduce us to the first three joyful mysteries of the rosary, three fundamental moments of salvation history, three stages along the way of the Holy Spirit’s creative passage through human history: the Annunciation, the Visitation and the birth of Jesus. In the first reading, St. Paul writes to the Galatians: "But when the designated time had come, God sent forth his Son born of a woman." In these few words St. Paul tells us what St. Luke describes at greater length in the Gospel: the visit of the Archangel Gabriel to a virgin named Mary, in the town of Nazareth in Galilee. He invites her to become the mother of the Redeemer. The Gospel tells us not only that Mary was surprised and confused by the words of the angel, but that she was afraid. Yes, Mary was afraid, just as we are often afraid! And the angel

Central and Eastern Europe effectively lost their sovereignty and were required to submit to the will dominating the entire bloc. The result of this artificial division of Europe was the ‘‘cold war’’, a situation of international tension in which the threat of a nuclear holocaust hung over humanity. It was only when freedom was restored to the nations of Central and Eastern Europe that the promise of the peace which should have come with the end of the war began to be realized for many of the victims of that conflict.

A study of these rights is certainly not easy, if we consider the difficulty of defining the very concept of ‘‘nation’’, which cannot be identified a priori and necessarily with the State. Such a study must nonetheless be made, if we wish to avoid the errors of the past and ensure a just world order.

A presupposition of a nation’s rights is certainly its right to exist: therefore no one-neither a State nor another nation, nor an international organization-is ever justified in asserting that an individual nation is not worthy of existence. This fundamental right to existence does not necessarily call for sovereignty as a state, since various forms of juridical aggregation between different nations are possible, as for example occurs in Federal States, in Confederations or in States characterized by broad regional autonomies. There can be historical circumstances in which aggregations different from single state sovereignty can even prove advisable, but only on condition that this takes place in a climate of true freedom, guaranteed by the exercise of the self-determination of the peoples concerned. Its right to exist naturally implies that every nation also enjoys the right to its own language and culture, through which a people expresses and promotes that which I would call its fundamental spiritual ‘‘sovereignty’’. History shows that in extreme circumstances (such as those which occurred in the land where I was born) it is precisely its culture that enables a nation to survive the loss of political and economic independence. Every nation therefore has also the right to shape its life according to its own traditions, excluding, of course, every abuse of basic human rights and in particular the oppression of minorities. Every nation has the right to build its future by providing an appropriate education for the younger generations.

During my pastoral pilgrimages to the communities of the Catholic Church over the past seventeen years, I have been able to enter into dialogue with the rich diversity of nations and cultures in every part of the world. Unhappily, the world has yet to learn

how to live with diversity, as recent events in the Balkans and Central Africa have painfully reminded us. The fact of ‘‘difference,’’ and the reality of ‘‘the other,’’ can sometimes be felt as a burden, or even as a threat. Amplified by historic grievances and exacerbated by the manipulations of the unscrupulous, the fear of ‘‘difference’’ can lead to a denial of the very humanity of ‘‘the other’’: with the result that people fall into a cycle of violence in which no one is spared, not even the children. We are all very familiar today with such situations; at this moment my heart and my prayers turn in a special way to the sufferings of the sorely tried peoples of Bosnia-Hercegovina.

From bitter experience, then, we know that the fear of ‘‘difference,’’ especially when it expresses itself in a narrow and exclusive nationalism which denies any rights to ‘‘the other,’’ can lead to a true nightmare of violence and terror. And yet if we make the effort to look at matters objectively, we can see that, transcending all the differences which distinguish individuals and peoples, there is a fundamental commonality. For different cultures are but different ways of facing the question of the meaning of personal existence. And it is precisely here that we find one source of the respect which is due to every culture and every nation: every culture is an effort to ponder the mystery of the world and in particular of the human person: it is a way of giving expression to the transcendent dimension of human life. The heart of every culture is its approach to the greatest of all mysteries: the mystery of God. Our respect for the culture of others is therefore rooted in our respect for each community’s attempt to answer the question of human life. And here we can see how important it is to safeguard the fundamental right to freedom of religion and freedom of conscience, as the cornerstones of the structure of human rights and the foundation of every truly free society. No one is permitted to suppress those rights by using coercive power to impose an answer to the mystery of man.

We need to clarify the essential difference between an unhealthy form of nationalism, which teaches contempt for other nations or cultures, and patriotism, which is a proper love of one’s country. True patriotism never seeks to advance the well-being of one’s own nation at the expense of others. For in the end this would harm one’s own nation as well: doing wrong damages both aggressor and victim. Nationalism, in its most radical forms, is thus the antithesis of true patriotism, and today we must ensure that extreme nationalism does not continue to give rise to new forms of the aberrations of totalitarianism.

Pope John Paul II Homily in Central Park
Saturday, October 7, 1995

Dear Brothers and Sisters My Friends in Christ,

Today’s liturgy is full of references to the Holy Spirit. Even as we pray for the Spirit to come among us, he is already here. He is here in so many of you. He is here above all in the action of the Mass, the most sacred rite of our faith. You are here, I trust, not out of simple curiosity to see the pope, but because of the Mass, because the Holy Spirit is leading us all to Christ!

For me it is a great joy to look out at so many wonderful people; and to greet Cardinal O’Connor and all the cardinals and the bishops from the New York Metropolitan Province and elsewhere; as well as all the priests, religious and laity of the archdiocese, and the civil authorities of the state and city of New York. My warm and affectionate greetings go to the sick and the handicapped among us. And it is especially wonderful to see so many young people. I can hardly believe we are not back in Denver, which was such an enriching experience. So many thousands of young people astonished everyone with their spirit and their faith.

I remember clearly that many people wondered and worried that the young people of America would not come to the World Youth Day, or, if they did come, that they would be a problem. Instead, the young people’s joy, their hunger for the truth, their desire to be united all together in the Body of Christ, made clear to everyone that many, very many young people of America have values and ideals which seldom make the headlines. Is it any wonder that the Pope loves you!

The Pope also loves the sons and daughters of the church who speak Spanish! Many of you have been born here or have lived here for a long time. Others are more recent arrivals. But you all bear the mark of your cultural heritage, deeply rooted in the Catholic tradition. Keep alive that faith and culture!

I know this is not Denver; this is New York! The great, great New York! This is Central Park. The beautiful surroundings of Central Park invite us to reflect on a more sublime beauty: the beauty of every human being, made in the image and likeness of God, and the beauty that is God living in our hearts through the Holy Spirit. At Denver we meditated on this new life: "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." In Manila, last year,

Society must strongly reaffirm the right of the child to grow up in a family in which, as far as possible, both parents are present. Fathers of families must accept their full share of responsibility for the lives and upbringing of their children. Both parents must spend time with their children. Both parents should be personally interested in their moral and religious education. Children need not only material support from their parents, but more importantly a secure, affectionate and morally correct family environment.

Catholic parents must learn to form their family as a domestic Church, a church in the home as it were, where God is honored, his law is respected, prayer is a normal event, virtue is transmitted by word and example, and everyone shares the hopes, the problems and sufferings of everyone else. All this is not to advocate a return to some outdated style of living: it is to return to the roots of human development and human happiness!

The truth which Christ reveals tells us that we must support one another and work together with others, despite cultural, social or religious differences. It challenges us to be involved. It gives us the courage to see Christ in our neighbor and to serve him there. And, in imitation of our Divine Master who said, ‘‘Come to me, all you who are weary and find life burdensome.’’ We ought to invite others to come to us by stretching out a helping hand to those in need, by welcoming the newcomer, by speaking words of comfort to the afflicted. This is the goodness in which the Holy Spirit confirms us! This is how you - women and men; young people and old; married couples and singles; parents, children and families; students and teachers; professional people, those who work and those who are suffering the terrible burden of unemployment - this is how everyone can make a positive contribution to America and help to transform your culture into a vibrant culture of life.

This, dear brothers and sisters, is what it means to work for the Kingdom of God in America today. This is the way which leads to the true progress of nations and peoples; it is the path of justice and peace, the light which shines in the darkness, the yoke which is easy and the burden which is light. This is where our souls will find rest. ‘‘Come, Holy Spirit, we stand in need of your grace. Make us grow in the heavenly knowledge you have revealed. Make it easy for us to understand it, and by our perseverance may it remain in us. Enlightened by that truth, we will be confirmed in goodness.’’ *p*Praise to our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Ladies and Gentlemen! Freedom is the measure of man’s dignity and greatness. Living the freedom sought by individuals and peoples is a great challenge to man’s spiritual growth and to the moral vitality of nations. The basic question which we must all face today is the responsible use of freedom, in both its personal and social dimensions. Our reflection must turn then to the question of the moral structure of freedom, which is the inner architecture of the culture of freedom.

Freedom is not simply the absence of tyranny or oppression. Nor is freedom a license to do whatever we like. Freedom has an inner ‘‘logic’’ which distinguishes it and ennobles it: freedom is ordered to the truth, and is fulfilled in man’s quest for truth and in man’s living in the truth. Detached from the truth about the human person, freedom deteriorates into license in the lives of individuals, and, in political life, it becomes the caprice of the most powerful and the arrogance of power. Far from being a limitation upon freedom or a threat to it, reference to the truth about the human person - a truth universally knowable through the moral law written on the hearts of all - is, in fact, the guarantor of freedom’s future. In the light of what has been said we understand how utilitarianism, the doctrine which defines morality not in terms of what is good but of what is advantageous, threatens the freedom of individuals and nations and obstructs the building of a true culture of freedom. Utilitarianism often has devastating political consequences, because it inspires an aggressive nationalism on the basis of which the subjugation, for example, of a smaller or weaker nation is claimed to be a good thing solely because it corresponds to the national interest. No less grave are the results of economic utilitarianism, which drives more powerful countries to manipulate and exploit weaker ones.

Nationalistic and economic utilitarianism are sometimes combined, a phenomenon which has too often characterized relations between the ‘‘North’’ and the ‘‘South’’ . For the emerging countries, the achievement of political independence has too frequently been accompanied by a situation of de facto economic dependence on other countries. Such situations offend the conscience of humanity and pose a formidable moral challenge to the human family.

Yes, distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen! The international economic scene needs an ethic of solidarity, if participation, economic growth, and a just distribution of goods are to

characterize the future of humanity. The international cooperation called for by the Charter of the United Nations for ‘‘solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character’’ cannot be conceived exclusively in terms of help and assistance, or even by considering the eventual returns on the resources provided. When millions of people are suffering from a poverty which means hunger, malnutrition, sickness, illiteracy, and degradation, we must not only remind ourselves that no one has a right to exploit another for his own advantage, but also and above all we must recommit ourselves to that solidarity which enables others to live out, in the actual circumstances of their economic and political lives, the creativity which is a distinguishing mark of the human person and the true source of the wealth of nations in today’s world.

As we face these enormous challenges, how can we fail to acknowledge the role of the United Nations Organization? The United Nations Organization needs to rise more and more above the cold status of an administrative institution and to become a moral center where all the nations of the world feel at home and develop a shared awareness of being, as it were, a ‘‘family of nations’’. The idea of ‘‘family’’ immediately evokes something more than simple functional relations or a mere convergence of interests. The family is by nature a community based on mutual trust, mutual support and sincere respect. In an authentic family the strong do not dominate; instead, the weaker members, because of their very weakness, are all the more welcomed and served.

Raised to the level of the ‘‘family of nations’’, these sentiments ought to be, even before law itself, the very fabric of relations between peoples. The United Nations has the historic, even momentous, task of promoting this qualitative leap in international life, not only by serving as a center of effective mediation for the resolution of conflicts but also by fostering values, attitudes and concrete initiatives of solidarity which prove capable of raising the level of relations between nations from the ‘‘organizational’’ to a more ‘‘organic’’ level, from simple ‘‘existence with’’ others to ‘‘existence for’’ others, in a fruitful exchange of gifts, primarily for the good of the weaker nations but even so, a clear harbinger of greater good for everyone.

None of this should appear an unattainable utopia. Now is the time for new hope, which calls us to expel the paralyzing burden of cynicism from the future of politics and of human life. The anniversary which we are celebrating invites us to do this by

among us, a human person, a human being, divine person. He entered the world’s history; he took on our history and made it complete. By his Resurrection he became Lord and was given full power in heaven and on earth. Thus through the power of his Spirit, Christ is now at work in our hearts and in our world. The Spirit instills in us a desire for the world to come, but he also inspires, purifies and strengthens those noble longings by which we strive to make earthly life more human.

Dear Friends, we are gathered together in this enormous metropolis of New York, considered by many to be the zenith of modern civilization and progress, a symbol of America and American life. For more than 200 years people of different nations, languages and cultures have come here, bringing memories and traditions of the old country, while at the same time becoming part of a new nation. America has a reputation the world over, a reputation of power, prestige and wealth, richness. But not everyone here is powerful; not everyone here is rich. In fact, America’s sometimes extravagant affluence often conceals much hardship and poverty.

From the viewpoint of the Kingdom of God we must therefore ask a very basic question: have the people living in this huge metropolis lost sight of the blessings which belong to the poor in spirit? In the midst of the magnificent scientific and technological civilization of which America is proud, and especially here in Queens, in Brooklyn, in New York, is there room for the mystery of God? That mystery which is revealed to the merest children; the mystery of the Father and the Son in the unity of the Holy Spirit; the mystery of divine love which is the source of everything? Is there room for the mystery of God? Is there room for the revelation of life - that transcendent life which Christ brings us at the price of his Cross and through the victory of his Resurrection?

The Gospel of the Kingdom of God is open to every aspect of earthly progress which helps people to discover and enter the space of divine life, the space of eternal salvation. This is the work of the Church; this is the work which the Holy Spirit will accomplish through all of us, if only we will heed the truth he reveals and be confirmed in goodness!

In practical terms, this truth tells us that there can be no life worthy of the human person without a culture - and a legal system - that honors and defends marriage and the family.

the spiritual darkness which sometimes envelops people, nations and history itself, in its desolate mantle. Certainly the 20th century has witnessed such periods of gloom. The two world wars were times of great darkness which plunged peoples and nations into immense suffering. For many people, the 20th century continues to be a time of terrible anguish and torture. From the depths of such sad experiences the human family searches for a path of justice and peace.

Isaiah goes on to suggest that genuine justice and peace, the authentic progress of peoples, is centered on God's plan to send a Savior. For he writes: ‘‘A child is born to us, a son is given us. ... His dominion is vast and forever peaceful. ... He confirms and sustains by judgment and justice, both now and forever.’’ Here the prophet is speaking of the Messiah whose arrival Israel so eagerly awaited. This is the Messiah so anxiously looked to by modern men and women, especially when they have been immersed in the devastating experiences of war, of concentration camps, of brutality and contempt for human dignity.

It is here that the words of Jesus, he who is our salvation and our hope, take on a special meaning: ‘‘Come to me, all you who are weary and find life burdensome, and I will refresh you.’’ Christ himself carried a burden, and his burden - the Cross - was made heavier by the sins of us all. But Christ did not avoid the Cross; he accepted it and carried it willingly. Moreover, he now stands beside those weighed down by trials and persecutions, remaining beside them to the end. It is for all people and with all people that he carries the Cross to Calvary, and it is there that for all of us he is nailed to his Cross. He dies the death of a criminal, the most humiliating death known to the world at that time. That is why to those in our own century who carry terrible burdens he is able to say: Come to me! I am your Brother in suffering. There is no humiliation or bitterness which I do not know!

It is precisely through the Gospel of the Cross and through his Resurrection that Christ lays the foundations for the advancement of God's Kingdom in the world. The presence of this Kingdom opens to us the dimension of eternity in God, and discloses the deepest meaning of our efforts to improve life here on earth.

What kind of society is worthy of the human person? The Church responds with the unique perspective of salvation history. The Church proclaims the truth that the Word of God, through whom all things were made, was himself made flesh and dwelt

reminding us of the idea of ‘‘united nations’’, an idea which bespeaks mutual trust, security and solidarity. Inspired by the example of all those who have taken the risk of freedom, can we not recommit ourselves also to taking the risk of solidarity - and thus the risk of peace?

It is one of the great paradoxes of our time that man, who began the period we call ‘‘modernity’’ with a self-confident assertion of his ‘‘coming of age’’ and ‘‘autonomy,’’ approaches the end of the twentieth century fearful of himself, fearful of what he might be capable of, fearful for the future. Indeed, the second half of the twentieth century has seen the unprecedented phenomenon of a humanity uncertain about the very likelihood of a future, given the threat of nuclear war. That danger, mercifully, appears to have receded-and everything that might make it return needs to be rejected firmly and universally; all the same, fear for the future and of the future remains.

In order to ensure that the new millennium now approaching will witness a new flourishing of the human spirit, mediated through an authentic culture of freedom, men and women must learn to conquer fear. We must learn not to be afraid, we must rediscover a spirit of hope and a spirit of trust. Hope is not empty optimism springing from a naive confidence that the future will necessarily be better than the past. Hope and trust are the premise of responsible activity and are nurtured in that inner sanctuary of conscience where ‘‘man is alone with God’’ and he thus perceives that he is not alone amid the enigmas of existence, for he is surrounded by the love of the Creator!

Hope and trust: These may seem matters beyond the purview of the United Nations. But they are not. The politics of nations, with which your Organization is principally concerned, can never ignore the transcendent, spiritual dimension of the human experience, and could never ignore it without harming the cause of man and the cause of human freedom. Whatever diminishes man harms the cause of freedom. In order to recover our hope and our trust at the end of this century of sorrows, we must regain sight of that transcendent horizon of possibility to which the soul of man aspires. As a Christian, my hope and trust are centered on Jesus Christ, the two thousandth anniversary of whose birth will be celebrated at the coming of the new millennium. We Christians believe that in his Death and Resurrection were fully revealed God's love and his care for all creation. Jesus Christ is for us God made man, and made a part of the history of humanity. Precisely

for this reason, Christian hope for the world and its future extends to every human person. Because of the radiant humanity of Christ, nothing genuinely human fails to touch the hearts of Christians.

Therefore, as we approach the two thousandth anniversary of the birth of Christ, the Church asks only to be able to propose respectfully this message of salvation, and to be able to promote, in charity and service, the solidarity of the entire human family.

We must overcome our fear of the future. But we will not be able to overcome it completely unless we do so together. The ‘‘answer’’ to that fear is neither coercion nor repression, nor the imposition of one social ‘‘model’’ on the entire world. The answer to the fear which darkens human existence at the end of the twentieth century is the common effort to build the civilization of love, founded on the universal values of peace, solidarity, justice, and liberty. And the ‘‘soul’’ of the civilization of love is the culture of freedom: the freedom of individuals and the freedom of nations, lived in self-giving solidarity and responsibility.

We must not be afraid of the future. We must not be afraid of man. It is no accident that we are here. Each and every human person has been created in the ‘‘image and likeness’’ of the One who is the origin of all that is. We have within us the capacities for wisdom and virtue. With these gifts, and with the help of God’s grace, we can build in the next century and the next millennium a civilization worthy of the human person, a true culture of freedom. We can and must do so! And in doing so, we shall see that the tears of this century have prepared the ground for a new springtime of the human spirit.

I should say a small greeting in the Arabic language and in Chinese: The United Nations says peace and the prosperity of the human family. I wish to the whole world and all peoples freedom and peace in living together the entire world can live in freedom and dignity and a truly achieved peace.

Pope John Paul II Homily at Giants Stadium
Thursday, October 5, 1995
Thy kingdom come.

Dear Archbishop McCarrick and my other brother bishops, dear brothers and sisters in Christ;

Jesus’ words in today’s Gospel bring me back to my youth and remind me of a song we used to sing in my home parish at Wadowice. The words of that song are very simple, but at the same time very profound: "Come, Holy Spirit, we stand in need of your grace." The translation has the same words and ideas, but it is not the same. ‘‘Make us grow in the heavenly knowledge you have revealed. Make it easy for us to understand it, and by our perseverance may it remain in us. Enlightened by that truth, we shall be confirmed in goodness.’’

These words express well the theology of the Holy Spirit, through whom the Father reveals what is ‘‘hidden from the learned and the clever,’’ and through whom the Son reveals the Father. The Spirit, in fact, is the active agent of the Church’s evangelizing mission. For this reason, the Church constantly invokes the Holy Spirit upon individual communities, and today we are doing the same, we renew that invocation here, at the Aqueduct Race Track in Queens.

I am happy to see such a representative gathering of the faithful of this local Church. I greet all of you with warm affection: Your stalwart pastor, Bishop Thomas Daily; my other brothers, cardinals and bishops; the priests, deacons, women and men and laity from the Diocese of Brooklyn and many other dioceses. At the same time my greetings go to the leaders of the various religious denominations and the civil authorities from both local and state government. I am pleased also, especially pleased, to greet the different councils of the Knights of Columbus from the United States and Canada which are represented here, together with the Supreme Knight, Mr. Virgil Dechant. Gathered around the altar of the Lord, let us offer this sacred act of worship, asking for strength to meet the challenges of the new evangelization to which the Holy Spirit is calling the Church of God.

I know that there are many Spanish-speaking people, families and communities present at this Mass. In the heart of the Pope and in the church, you have a special place. To each one I express my sincere love and affection in the Lord.

The theme of this morning’s Holy Mass is the ‘‘Progress of Peoples.’’ Progress of peoples is closely connected with the proclamation of Christ’s message of salvation and hope. Of this salvation Isaiah speaks in the first reading: ‘‘The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone.’’ This darkness stands for

of long and difficult struggles to overcome the prejudices which excluded certain categories of people from a full share in the country's life: first, the struggle against religious intolerance, then the struggle against racial discrimination and in favor of civil rights for everyone. Sadly, today a new class of people is being excluded. When the unborn child - the stranger in the womb - is declared to be beyond the protection of society, not only are America's deepest traditions radically undermined and endangered, but a moral blight is brought upon society. I am also thinking of threats to the elderly, the severely handicapped and all those who do not seem to have any social usefulness. When innocent human beings are declared inconvenient or burdensome, and thus unworthy of legal and social protection, grievous damage is done to the moral foundations of the democratic society, community. The right to life is the first of all rights. It is the foundation of democratic liberties and the keystone of the edifice of civil society. Both as Americans and as followers of Christ, American Catholics must be committed to the defense of life in all its stages and in every condition.

Dear sisters and brothers: As Christians, we live by faith and in hope. We wait for the return of the Lord as the judge of the living and the dead. We await His return in glory, the coming of God's kingdom in its fullness. That is the constant invitation of the psalms: ''Wait for the Lord with courage; be stouthearted, and wait for the Lord.''

Our confidence in the future which God has opened before us enables us to see this earthly life in its proper light. In the perspective of God's kingdom we discern the true value of all the accomplishments of human civilization and culture, of all our achievements, our struggles and our sufferings. As Americans, you are rightly proud of your country's great achievements. As Christians, you know all things human are the soil in which the kingdom of God is meant to take root and mature! To the church in the United States, to you the church in Newark, I make this appeal: Do not make an idol of any temporal reality! Know that the kingdom of God is at hand. Wait for the Lord with courage; be stouthearted. Hope in the Lord! Amen.

Pope John Paul II Homily at Aqueduct
Friday, October 6, 1995

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Each day in the "Our Father" we pray: ''Thy kingdom come!'' And in today's Gospel we have heard about Jesus sending out His disciples to proclaim that ''the kingdom of God is at hand.''

Today, we are celebrating the good news of God's kingdom here in Giants Stadium, in the Archdiocese of Newark, in New Jersey - the Garden State. I greet the whole Catholic community of Newark, in a special way your pastor and my dear and faithful friend, Archbishop McCarrick, whom I thank for his warm words of welcome. I greet God's beloved people from all of New Jersey - the bishops, priests, deacons, seminarians, women and men religious, parents, children, the young, the old, the sick; these greetings include our brothers and sisters of Eastern Rite Dioceses, whose presence gives vibrant witness to the rich diversity of God's holy church. I am also grateful to the civic leaders of city and state and the representatives of the various religious denominations who have wished to share this moment of prayer with us.

I wish to greet all Spanish-speaking people present at this mass, for the church in the United States also speaks Spanish. I wish to encourage you to let your faith be ever more visible in your daily lives, in the care of your families, in your professional and social commitments. Never lose the joy and generosity with which you have learned to follow our Lord Jesus Christ!

What is this kingdom, what is this kingdom, which Jesus announced and which the church continues to proclaim down the centuries? First, it is the affirmation of God's dominion over all creation. As creator, He reigns over the world He has made. But the kingdom means more. It means that God is present as Lord in this world. The kingdom is present above all in Jesus Christ, the eternal son, who became flesh and dwelt among us. Furthermore, the kingdom embraces us all: by His death on the cross and His resurrection from the dead, Christ redeemed us from our sins and gave us new life in the Spirit. Through the paschal mystery - as Saint Paul writes - God ''has rescued us from the power of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of his beloved son.''

The Gospel shows us Jesus sending His disciples to proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God. He tells them openly that some people will ignore or reject their message. But such human resistance will not prevent the coming of the kingdom. The kingdom is always present because the Father

Himself, the Father Himself has brought it into the world through the passion, death and resurrection of His son, Jesus Christ.

In order to bring us this salvation, Jesus established the church to be a kind of sacrament - a sign and instrument - of intimate union with God and of the unity of all mankind. Among the many magnificent images which the Bible uses to describe the church, one of the most beautiful is that of the house in which God dwells with His people. The Lord wants His church to ‘‘make a home’’ in the midst of every people, grafting the gifts of salvation on to the history and culture of each nation. In today’s Gospel, Jesus sends His disciples into people’s houses, to bring them His peace. In every place where people make their homes and live their lives, a disciple of Jesus must arrive to say: ‘‘The Kingdom of God is at hand.’’

Tonight we give thanks to God for the way in which the church has made a home in America. From the beginning, in this new land the church grew out of the faith of peoples from many cultural and ethnic backgrounds, embracing the indigenous people and settlers alike. Everywhere we see the results of the labors of countless, countless priests, religious sisters and brothers, Christian families and individual lay men and women who made the church present in American society through a great network of parishes, schools, hospitals and charitable institutions. This proud heritage should serve as an inspiration and an incentive for you as you seek to meet the challenges of our own times.

The church must continue to build God’s spiritual house in America! Here in the Church in Newark, last year’s Archdiocesan Synod put the whole Catholic community in a state of mission. In particular, the synod appealed to the laity to work for God’s kingdom by their efforts to shape society in accordance with God’s designs. No aspect of life - whether in the family, in the workplace, in schools, in economic, political or social activities - can be withdrawn from God’s dominion. As we prepare to celebrate the two thousandth anniversary of Christ’s birth, your synod, like the whole church, recognized the need for a new evangelization, a new and vital proclamation of the Gospel aimed at integrating your faith ever more fully into the fabric of your daily lives.

The Christian life is a dynamic reality: the seed of faith sown in our hearts through baptism must ripen and mature into a

rich harvest of union with God and good works in the service of others. Jesus uses the image of the harvest to describe the church’s role in the world. From generation to generation, in every time and place, the seed sown by God in human history through the death and resurrection of Christ continues to mature and awaits the harvest.

Jesus reminds us that more workers for the harvest are urgently needed, and He commands us to pray for them: ‘‘The harvest is rich but the workers are few; therefore ask the harvest-master to send workers to his harvest.’’ The question of vocations is vital to the church. Everyone has a vocation: parents, teachers, students, workers, professional people, people who are retired. Everyone has something to do for God. We must pray that young people especially will listen to the Lord’s call to serve as priests, as religious sisters and brothers, as missionaries at home and in other lands. Young people of Newark and New Jersey, young Americans, the Lord needs you! The church needs you!

Compared to many other parts of the world, the United States is a privileged, privileged land. Yet, even here there is much poverty and human suffering. There is much need for love and the works of love; there is need for social solidarity. Early Americans were proud of their strong sense of individual responsibility, but that did not lead them to build a radically individualistic society. They built a community-based society, community-based society with a great openness and sensitivity to the needs of their neighbors.

Quite close to the shores of New Jersey there rises a universally- known landmark which stands as an enduring witness to the American tradition of welcoming the stranger, and which tells us something important about the kind of nation America has aspired to be. It is the Statue of Liberty, Statue of Liberty with its celebrated poem: ‘‘Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free ... Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me.’’ Is present-day America becoming less sensitive, less caring towards the poor, the weak, the stranger, the needy? It must not! Today, as before, the United States is called to be a hospitable society, a welcoming culture. If America were to turn in on itself, would this not be the beginning of the end of what constitutes the very essence of the American experience?

To a great extent, the story of America has been the story