



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II TO THE PEOPLE OF NEW YORK

*Saint Patrick's Cathedral, New York
Tuesday, 2 October 1979*

Dear Cardinal Cooke, dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I consider it a special grace to come back to New York—to be back in Saint Patrick's during the Cathedral's centenary year.

Six months ago I wrote a [letter to Cardinal Cooke](#), stating that it was "my earnest hope that the local ecclesial community, symbolized by this glorious edifice in stone (cf. *1 Pt 2 :5*), may be renewed in the faith of Peter and Paul—in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ—and that each one of you will find fresh vigor for authentic Christian living". And this is my hope for all of you today. This is why I am here: to confirm you in your holy, Catholic and apostolic faith; to invoke upon you the joy and strength that will sustain you in Christian living.

On this occasion I send my greetings to all the people of New York. In a special way my heart is with the poor, with those who suffer, with those who are alone and abandoned in the midst of this teeming metropolis.

I pray for the success of the apostolate in this Archdiocese: may the spires of Saint Patrick's Cathedral always reflect the thrust with which the Church fulfills her fundamental function in every age: "to direct man's gaze, to point the awareness and experience of the whole of humanity towards the mystery of God, to help all men and women to be familiar with the profundity of the Redemption taking place in Christ Jesus" ([Redemptor Hominis](#), 10).

This too is included in the symbolism of Saint Patrick's; this is the mission of the Church in New York—the expression of her vital and distinctive service to humanity: to direct hearts to God, to keep alive hope in the world. And so we repeat with Saint Paul: "This explains why we work and struggle as we do; our hopes are fixed on the living God" (*1 Tim 4 :10*).

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