



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
to the President of the Former Yugoslavian Republic of MACEDONIA,
H.E.Mr. Kiro GLINGOROV****

26 May de 1995

Mr. President, Representatives of the Government, Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

1. In extending a cordial welcome to you, I wish to greet the entire people you represent. Your visit is inspired by your desire to pay homage to Sts Cyril and Methodius on the anniversary of their feast according to the Eastern calendar. This is a welcome occasion for the Church of Rome and for its Bishop to observe once again what vibrant spiritual bonds also unite the West and East through the two apostles of the Slavs.

In fact Cyril and Methodius are, in the first place, “the champions and also the patrons of the ecumenical endeavour of the sister Churches of East and West” (Encyclical Epistle *Slavorum Apostoli*; n. 27). But the teaching and the example of the two holy Brothers should also enrich the ideals of society as such. In fact, they “made a decisive contribution to the building of Europe not only in Christian religious communion but also to its civil and cultural union” (ibid.).

2. It can be easily understood how these two aspects of their message integrate and complete each other. During my visits to various European countries and in the many endeavours in which I have been able to participate, I have never failed to recall Europe’s Christian roots, stressing how it is from them that the sap flows that feeds the cohesion of the continent and reconciles its diversity. It is precisely by returning to their common patrimony that the people of Europe can draw encouragement for mutual understanding and readiness to co-operate through a generous exchange of the fruits of their respective cultural and spiritual differences. The rich diversity which constitutes the composite fabric of Europe should, however, contribute to the continent’s beauty by urging it to seek vital unity in the real communion of its various components.

On two different levels, but with equal responsibility, civil society and the ecclesial community are called to work so that the path indicated by the Holy Brothers from Thessalonica may also be followed today with courage and perseverance.

This is my sincere wish for you who come from a region which is close to my heart and which is constantly in my prayers. May your land be always blessed by social harmony, far-sighted goals and prosperity for everyone.

In thanking each one of you for the kind courtesy of this visit, I invoke the help of the Lord and the protection of Sts Cyril and Methodius on all your people.

**L'Osservatore Romano. Weekly Edition in English n.27 p.9.*

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