



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER
POPE JOHN PAUL II
TO THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM
SPONSORED BY THE INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN SCIENCES IN VIENNA
(CASTEL GANDOLFO, 17-18 AUGUST)**

17 August 1998

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, It is with great pleasure that I welcome you and thank you for taking part in this Colloquium. From the outset I wish to say how much I appreciate your willingness to give your time and your expertise to this exercise, which I hope will truly be an enjoyable experience for us all. You are representatives of the academic, scientific, political and publishing fields, from different parts of the world and from a variety of backgrounds. The aim of our Colloquium is to “focus” this great resource of thought and experience on a theme which is both eminently stimulating at the level of intellectual inquiry and eminently practical in its capacity to suggest ways forward for humanity at this juncture: *“At the End of the Millennium: Time and Modernities”*. The Church has a message of salvation to preach which she has received from her divine Founder. But she must preach that message to the people of every age. She needs help to understand each age, each period of history, with its presuppositions, its values, its expectations and its limitations and errors. Are we witnessing one of the most complex and decisive periods of human history? Is this an end time or a beginning? For my part, I look forward to hearing your views. I have always considered the search for “the truth of things” as the defining human quality. I have the highest esteem for the commitment and self-giving effort which your search involves. As we begin these two days of reflection, I offer you my prayer to the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, that he may guide us and sustain our efforts. *Come Holy Spirit, fill our hearts with your love and enable us to share in your great mission: to renew the face of the earth!*

Before concluding, the Holy Father addressed a brief greeting in German and Polish to those present. Es ist mir eine besondere Freude, die Teilnehmer deutscher Sprache an diesem achten Kolloquium von Castelgandolfo willkommen zu heißen. Ich wünsche uns allen, daß diese gute Gelegenheit, unser Verständnis für die Zeit und für die Geschichte, die Mutter und Lehrerin für das Leben ist, erweitern kann. Dadurch wollen wir einen weiteren bescheidenen Beitrag für die Menschheit an der Schwelle zum neuen Jahrtausend leisten. *Pragne serdecznie powitac dostojnych moich rodaków. Ciesze sie, ze ponownie dane mi jest podejmowac w Castel Gandolfo tych, którzy chca dzielic sie swoimi doswiadczeniami i przemyśleniami na tematy wazne w perspektywie zarówno ogólnoludzkiej kultury, jak i misji Kosciola. Dziekuje Wam za przybycie i zycze owocnych obrad. Sle serdeczne pozdrowienia dla ks. Józefa Tischnera. ©*

