



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE INSPECTORATE
OF PUBLIC SECURITY AT THE VATICAN**

Thursday, 14 January 1999

*Mr Prefect,
Officials and Officers,*

1. Welcome to this meeting! I thank the Lord who gives us the joy of meeting again at the beginning of this New Year to exchange best wishes. The occasion is an excellent opportunity to express my deep gratitude to you for your service. I greet you all and offer you my heartfelt thanks.

In particular, I extend my greetings to Dr Enrico Marinelli, Prefect and Coordinator of Security Services for the Vatican, whom I thank for his noble words expressing your common sentiments. I would like to express my gratitude to you, Mr Prefect, for the tireless and generous dedication of your service, and for conveying to your colleagues heartfelt enthusiasm for the ideals which have always guided your activity.

I express my trust to you, members of the Inspectorate of Public Security at the Vatican, to the Vatican Traffic Police as well as to the representatives from Rome's Police Headquarters and the Italian Police, confirming once again on this occasion my appreciation of the competent work you perform with a deep sense of responsibility.

I am quite familiar with the necessary and demanding service of keeping order which is entrusted to your care. The discreet and intelligent presence, which has always distinguished you, is meant to prevent and deter anyone from causing a disturbance, so that the Pope can carry out his activities in a peaceful atmosphere that guarantees the possibility of an authentic religious experience for the pilgrims who come to visit him and to pray in the places sacred to Christianity.

2. Moreover, in the light of faith your activities are enriched with profound meaning, to which each of you can refer to find encouragement and inspiration in fulfilling your daily duties, especially when extra effort and sacrifices are required.

I hope that the external order which you maintain with attentive vigilance will reflect a harmonious inner order: an order of thoughts, decisions and convictions; an order of guidelines for life, human ideals, and moral and religious commitment, especially in view of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000. As you know, it will begin with the opening of the Holy Door in St Peter's next Christmas Eve. We are well aware that on the occasion of this epochal event we must prepare to welcome an immense crowd of pilgrims and tourists from all parts of the world. It will be the task of your Inspectorate, in collaboration with the other security forces serving the citizenry, to guarantee their tranquillity and protection, especially during the major celebrations scheduled in St Peter's Basilica and Square throughout the Jubilee Year. I know that you are being organized to respond adequately to the Holy Year's requirements, with a concerted effort of technological means and human resources. I am deeply grateful to you for this.

3. Dear friends, may the Lord help you and may his protection always accompany you. I commend you and your work to Blessed Mary, Mother of Jesus and our Mother. May she, who knows the responsibilities entrusted to you and the difficulties of your daily work, be close to you, so that your ideals, intentions, aspirations and plans may all be blessed by God and produce the desired results. For my part, I assure you of a constant remembrance in prayer and, as I wish you and your families peace and joy at the start of 1999, I impart a special Apostolic Blessing to you all.