



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF PAUL VI
TO MISTER NEIL ARMSTRONG, COLONEL EDWIN ALDRIN
AND LIEUTENANT-COLONEL MICHAEL COLLINS**

Thursday, 16 October 1969

*Mister Armstrong,
Colonel Aldrin,
Lieutenant-Colonel Collins,*

It is with the greatest joy in our heart, that We welcome you here to-day-you who have broken through the barrier of space to land on another world of God's creation.

Man has a natural urge to explore the unknown-to know the unknown; yet man has also a fear of the unknown. Your bravery has transcended this fear, and through your intrepid adventure, man has taken another step towards knowing more of the universe; in your words, Mr. Armstrong, "one giant leap for mankind".

We admire your courage, and We admire the spirit with which you fulfilled this mission: a spirit of service to humanity, and a spirit of peace. Our prayers, with the prayers of the Church throughout the world, were with you every moment of your voyage, and We, on behalf of the whole Church, offer Our sincerest congratulations to you, and also, through you, to the scientists, the technicians, the workers, and all who contributed knowledge, skill and labour to this supreme enterprise. We also congratulate and thank the President and people of your beloved nation for making possible this exploration, with typical generosity of spirit, for the good of man and the world.

We praise the genius, dedication and perseverance which has been shown throughout this magnificent undertaking. The standard of collaboration and co-operation, and the perfection which was reached in the organization and in the sciences and talent's employed, are the admiration of the world and pay tribute to the capacity of modern man to reach beyond himself, to reach beyond

human nature, to attain the perfection of achievement made possible by his God-given intelligence.

We give praise to God, Creator of the world, and because “The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims His handiwork” (*Ps. 18: 2*), We pray to Him that we may see more of the good Creation, and that from this we may see more clearly His power, His infinity and His perfection, that by this knowledge men may more and more be drawn together, as His children, in fraternal love, in peace and in prayer.

We thank and give glory to God for the successful achievement of your mission, for the things you have discovered, and for your safe return to earth, and We invoke upon you, your wives and your children richest blessings and favours from the Lord of the heavens.