



The Holy See

JOHN XXIII

*To Representatives sent by foreign States for his coronation**

November 5, 1958 It is a great joy for Us, gentlemen, to welcome you and to be able to express personally Our sincere gratitude. Your coming to the solemnities of Our Coronation is indeed a joint action that We have greatly appreciated, as much for the eagerness of your governments in having themselves represented at these pontifical festivities as for the number and the quality of the extraordinary delegations that you constitute. How could We not be deeply responsive to such a gesture of veneration toward the Holy See and Our person? Therefore, before all else, We wish to ask you kindly to be the interpreters of Our grateful sentiments toward your Sovereigns and Chiefs of State. The liturgical ceremony at which you assisted yesterday renewed time honored rites, and for this reason it recalls the long tradition of the Church and its history so closely connected with that of your own nations. And, at the same time, your presence at this ceremony was in Our eyes a living sign of the cordial and fruitful relations that the Apostolic See has today, as in the past, with so many countries that are anxious to see the highest spiritual values developing in their midst and for their own happiness. We thank God for thus giving Us, on the threshold of Our Pontificate, such legitimate reason for confidence in the good relations that We want to have with your countries. Moreover, in seeing your numerous delegations, here from the most different and most distant countries, and today gathered around Our person, how could We not express from an ardent heart the wish – already formulated many times and always abounding in hope – for a just and fraternal peace among nations? And here We recall, with emotion that you understand, the great figure of Our venerated Predecessor: for almost twenty years, without ever allowing himself to be disheartened by events that were sometimes cruel, he made the ideal of a peaceful order among nations resplendent in the eyes of men, worked perseveringly to establish it in the world, and constituted himself the fearless defender of the most sacred rights of individuals and of nations. The same ideal animates Us, by virtue of the sacred obligations that We have received, and We will dedicate Our strength to serve it. What a comfort for Us, gentlemen, on the day after Our Coronation, to be able to confide to you this intention, which is dear to Us, and to express in your presence the hope that in the world there may advance the great interests of peace, of justice, and of true liberty, so consistent with the teachings of the Divine Founder of the Church! Your presence strengthens Our hope, and We are grateful to you for it. So it is with special good will that We call upon you gentlemen, upon your countries and those who govern them, a generous shower of heavenly favors. Gladly do We give you in pledge of them, our Apostolic Benediction.

* *The Pope Speaks*, vol.5 n°3 p.300.

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