



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF POPE FRANCIS TO A DELEGATION OF THE "ORIENTALE LUMEN FOUNDATION" IN AMERICA

*Hall of Popes
Friday, 24 October 2014*

Dear Brothers in Christ,

I warmly greet all the participants on this ecumenical pilgrimage, sponsored by the Orientale Lumen Foundation and led by Metropolitan Kàllistos of Diokleia, whom I thank for his words. In these days you are making a stop here in Rome. Thank you for your presence.

Every Christian pilgrimage is not just a geographical journey, but above all it is an opportunity to undertake a path of interior renewal in order to go ever more towards Christ the Lord “the pioneer and perfecter of our faith” (Heb 12:2). These aspects are absolutely essential for proceeding down the path that leads to reconciliation and full communion among all believers in Christ. There is no true ecumenical dialogue without readiness for interior renewal and the search for greater fidelity to Christ and to his will.

I am glad to learn that on your pilgrimage you chose to commemorate Popes [John XXIII](#) and [John Paul II](#), who were [canonized last April](#). This choice emphasizes their great contribution to the advancement of closer relations between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Churches. The example of these two Saints is surely illuminating for us all, because they always bore witness to an ardent passion for the unity of Christians, sprung from docile listening to the will of the Lord, who at the Last Supper prayed to the Father that his disciples “may be one” (cf. Jn 17:21). At this moment, I wish to recall only — among the many things that I could mention — that St John XXIII, when he convoked the [Second Vatican Council](#), indicated Christian unity among its aims, and that St John Paul II gave a significant boost to the ecumenical commitment of the Catholic Church with his Encyclical Letter [Ut Unum Sint](#). During this pilgrimage to Rome, dear brothers, I would also like to ask you to pray for me, that, through the intercession of these two Saints, my Predecessors, I may be able to carry out my ministry as the Bishop of Rome in service to the communion and the unity of the Church, following in all things the will of the Lord.

In the coming days, your pilgrimage will stop at the Phanar, where you will meet the Ecumenical Patriarch, His Holiness Bartholomew I. I ask you to convey to him my warm and brotherly greetings together with the assurance of my affection and my esteem. As you know, I too am preparing to [visit the Ecumenical Patriarch in November](#) on the occasion of the Feast of the Apostle St Andrew, in response to the kind invitation of His Holiness Bartholomew. The visit of the Bishop of Rome to the Ecumenical Patriarch and the new meeting between Patriarch Bartholomew and myself will be a sign of the deep bond that unites the Sees of Rome and of Constantinople and of the will to overcome, in love and in truth, the obstacles that still separate us.

In wishing you well on the continuation of your pilgrimage, with abundant spiritual gifts, I ask you to please pray for me and, from the heart, I impart my blessing to you!