



# The Holy See

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APOSTOLIC JOURNEY TO THE PHILIPPINES,  
PAPUA NEW GUINEA, AUSTRALIA AND SRI LANKA

## FAREWELL CEREMONY

### *ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II*

*Jackson International Airport of Port Moresby  
Wednesday, 18 January 1995*

*Dear Friends,*

*Dear People of Papua New Guinea,*

I take leave of you and your beautiful country with my heart filled with *gratitude, joy and hope*.

1. I am deeply *grateful* for the warm hospitality which the people of Papua New Guinea have shown me. I express my sincere thanks to all those who made this pastoral visit possible, especially His Excellency the Governor-General, the Prime Minister and the distinguished members of Parliament. My thanks go likewise to my Brother Bishops, the clergy, Religious and laity, many of whom have made quiet and unseen sacrifices so that this visit might bring happiness and strength to others. I also thank those who have assisted me so generously, those who have ensured the orderly running of the events and those in the media who have made it possible for my voice to reach people in other places.

2. *I have felt great joy* during my brief visit among you – joy most of all for having had the opportunity to celebrate *here in Papua New Guinea* the Beatification of Peter To Rot, the first son of this land to be officially named among the Blessed in heaven. This has been a real occasion for rejoicing on the part of the Catholics of your nation, and it has been a significant event for all your people. The life of Blessed Peter To Rot is a precious treasure which remains forever yours. It is a beacon shining bright, a signal fire leading you to hold aloft the noble ideals which inspired him:

faith in God, love of family, service of neighbour, and unswerving courage in the face of trials and sacrifice.

3. Our meetings during these past two days have given me *much hope*. Everywhere I have met people with a real desire to serve God and to walk in his paths. In your faith you will find the wisdom and inspiration to meet the challenges facing your country. Faith demands solidarity with those affected by the tragic volcanic eruption in New Britain and with the refugees in various parts of Papua New Guinea. Faith demands that all sides involved in the armed conflict and violence in Bougainville should have the courage to seek a truly just and peaceful solution to their disputes. Faith demands that everyone should work together for the good of the whole people.

4. Dear Friends: As you look out upon your beautiful land with its jungles and mighty rivers, its mountains and deep valleys, its volcanoes and limitless seas, give thanks to God whose goodness is without end. With your many different languages and traditions you are a wonderful tapestry which God is weaving into the image of a diverse but united family of peoples upon whom he wishes to shower his blessings. I pray that his peace will always reign in your homes and in your lives!

(in Pidgin–English)

*God bless yupela olgeta. God bless Papua Niugini.*