



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER
POPE JOHN PAUL II
TO A DELEGATION OF FAO***

15 October 1998

Dear Doctor Diouf,

Dear Friends, It is a pleasure for me to receive this visit from the Executive Director of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization together with the Independent Chairman of the Council, the Director of Protocol and the Representatives of the Regional Groups of FAO member countries. I gratefully accept the FAO *agricola* medal as an honour bestowed not upon myself alone but upon all Catholics — priests, Religious and laity — and upon all men and women of good will who, as associates in International Agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations, work tirelessly on every continent to alleviate the scourge of hunger and to promote economic conditions which will permit all people to lead a decent life. I share this honour also with all those who work the land, for without their hard and often hidden toil there would be no hope of combatting hunger and malnutrition. Over the past fifty-four years FAO has played an indispensable role in reminding the world that ensuring an adequate food supply, as well as fostering equitable and sustainable growth in the area of agriculture, must be integral components of every economic programme. In the name of the Catholic Church, and speaking also for all men and women of good will, I thank FAO for all that it has done since 1945 to improve the world's food supply. I encourage its directors and personnel to be ever steadfast and conscientious in their commitment to the distinguished work to which the International Community has called them. Thank you all, and God bless you and your

work.

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