



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II TO THE ITALIAN STATE POLICE

Thursday, 15 February 2001

Mr Commissioner,

Dear Officials and Officers of the Rome Police Headquarters!

1. I am pleased to have today's meeting, which is taking place just over a month since the close of the Great Jubilee, in order to express my gratitude to you for the generous work you carry out each day and which was unusually intense during the months of the Jubilee Year.

I first thank Commissioner Giovanni Finazzo for his presence and for his kind words to me on behalf of you all. Thinking back over the Jubilee events, which were attended by an enormous number of pilgrims, we must thank God again for the order and seriousness with which everything took place. At the same time, however, it is also right to recognize the valuable contribution of those who, like you, have attentively watched over millions of pilgrims visiting the Roman basilicas, especially here in the Vatican. I know that this involved personal and family inconveniences for all of you, as well as extra effort with much forbearance and sacrifice. May God, who considers everything in his provident mercy, amply reward you.

2. I cannot fail to recall some of the unforgettable moments we spent together. I am thinking of the meetings in St Peter's Square and Basilica, the visits by authorities from every part of the world and many other occasions, which made the Holy Year an event of extraordinary grace for millions of people. In a very special way I would like to mention World Youth Day, when you were energetically involved in St Peter's Square, in the city of Rome and especially at Tor Vergata for the Vigil and the final Mass.

I am sure that for you too the Jubilee was an intense moment of grace, whose spiritual fruits continue to mark your life. Now you have returned to your ordinary activities and I would also like

to thank you for your discreet but necessary presence. I ask the Lord to help you faithfully to carry out your work. I include in my prayers a remembrance of your families and loved ones.

As I entrust you to the loving intercession of Blessed Mary and St Michael the Archangel, your special patron, I impart my affectionate Blessing to each of you and gladly extend it to your loved ones.