



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC VISIT TO TORONTO,
TO CIUDAD DE GUATEMALA AND TO CIUDAD DE MÉXICO

ARRIVAL CEREMONY

ADDRESS BY THE HOLY FATHER JOHN PAUL II

*International Airport of Mexico City
Tuesday, July 30, 2002*

*Mr President of the United Mexican States,
Your Eminence, the Cardinal Archbishop of Mexico City,
Dear Brothers in the Episcopate,
Distinguished Authorities and Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
Dear Mexican People,*

1. I am filled with great joy at being able to come to this hospitable land for the fifth time. It was here that I began my Apostolic travels which have taken me as the Successor of the Apostle Peter to so many parts of the world, bringing me close to many men and women to strengthen them in their faith in our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

After celebrating the [17th World Youth Day in Toronto](#), today I have had the good fortune to add to the list of saints a wonderful evangelizer from this continent: [Brother Pedro de San José de Betancurt](#). Tomorrow, with deep joy I shall canonize [Juan Diego](#), and on the following day I shall beatify two other compatriots of yours: [Juan Bautista and Jacinto de los Ángeles](#), who will thus join these beautiful examples of holiness in these beloved American countries, where the Christian message has been welcomed with open hearts, permeating their cultures and bringing forth abundant fruit.

2. I am grateful for the friendly words of welcome which the President has addressed to me on

behalf of all Mexicans. I would like to reciprocate by renewing once more my sentiments of affection and esteem for this people with their wealth of history and ancestral cultures. I encourage everybody to work for the building up of an ever renewed homeland and for the country's continual progress. I greet with affection the Cardinals and Bishops, the dear priests, men and women religious, all the faithful who day by day endeavour to practise the Christian faith and make the words that are the hope and programme of the future come true: "Mexico ever faithful!". From here I also send an affectionate greeting to the young people gathered at a prayer vigil in Plaza del Zócalo in front of the Primatial Cathedral, and I tell them that the Pope is counting on them and asking them to be true friends of Jesus and witnesses to his Gospel.

3. Dear Mexicans: thank you for your hospitality, for your constant affection, for your fidelity to the Church. Continue to be faithful on this journey, encouraged by the marvellous examples of holiness born in this noble nation. Be holy! Repeating what I said to you in the Basilica of Guadalupe in 1990, serve God, the Church and the nation, each one assuming personal responsibility for passing on the Gospel message and witnessing to a faith that is alive and active in society.

I cordially bless each one of you, with the words which your ancestors addressed to their loved ones: "May God make you like Juan Diego!".

"México siempre fiel!" (Mexico ever faithful!)