



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE
"POPE JOHN PAUL II CULTURAL CENTER"
IN WASHINGTON (U.S.A.)**

Friday, 8 November 2002

*Your Eminence,
Dear Friends,*

Once again this year I am pleased to welcome you to the Vatican on the occasion of your annual visit. I am grateful to Cardinal Maida for his continuing guidance of the Center and its activities, and I thank all of you for supporting its efforts to present the Catholic tradition in its richness and cultural relevance.

It is significant that the Cultural Center opened its doors as the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000 concluded and the Church made ready to "set out into the deep" (cf. Lk 5:6) with renewed commitment to proclaim the Gospel to all nations and peoples. The mission of the Center, so close to my heart, is inspired by the firm conviction that Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word of God, is the center of human history and the key which unlocks the mystery of man and reveals his sublime calling (cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, 22). To build a world more worthy of humanity, it is urgent that Christ be proclaimed with joy and conviction as "the way, and the truth and the light" (cf. Jn 14:6) which can illumine the life of each individual and the destiny of the whole human family. The Cultural Center is committed to showing how the Gospel responds to our deepest yearnings and highest aspirations as these find expression in the cultures which shape the future of our world. It is my hope that in carrying out this essential mission, the Center will make a distinctive contribution to the new evangelization.

Dear friends, I thank you and the staff and benefactors of the Center for your promotion of its initiatives. To you and your families I cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing as a pledge of joy and

peace in the Lord.

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