



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO HIS BEATITUDE TEOCTIST
ORTHODOX PATRIARCH OF ROMANIA***

Monday 7 October 2002

I have the joy of welcoming the Orthodox Patriarch of Romania, His Beatitude Teoctist, and the distinguished members of his delegation who have accompanied him to Rome for a visit that starts today. His Beatitude the Patriarch has just arrived and I wanted his visit to begin in the context of this General Audience, in the presence of so many of the faithful who have come from every part of the world.

Your Beatitude and dear Brother, you are making this visit motivated by my same sentiments and expectation! Meeting at the tomb of the Holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, is a sign of our common will to overcome the obstacles that still prevent the re-establishment of full communion between us.

This visit is also an act purifying our memories of division, of our often heated confrontations, of actions and words, which led to painful separation. However, the future is not a dark and unknown tunnel. It is already enlightened by God's grace; on it the life-giving light of the Spirit is already shining with comforting rays in it. This certainty does not only prevail over every human discouragement, over the tiredness that at times slows our steps; it convinces us above all that nothing is impossible for God, and therefore, if we are worthy of it, he will also grant us the gift of full unity.

I entrust to your prayers, dear faithful who are present, the visit to Rome of His Beatitude Teoctist, and I warmly hope that he may find in all who receive him on my behalf the same sentiments as those with which I welcome him today. May these days foster our dialogue, nourish our hopes and make us more aware of what unites us, our common roots of faith, our liturgical patrimony and of the saints and witnesses whom we have in common. May the Lord grant us once again to

experience how beautiful, how joyful it is to call on him together!

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