



The Holy See

***LETTERA DI SUA SANTITÀ PIO XII
AL PRESIDENTE DEGLI STATI UNITI,
FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT****

5 gennaio 1943

The greetings and good wishes which Your Excellency has so kindly extended to Us for the holy season of Christmas have been a source of particular pleasure to Us.

Our heart, too, is saddened by the thought that once again the serene light that radiates from Bethlehem shines upon a world troubled and ensanguined by the war.

We derive comfort, however, from the certainty that, in homage to the duty which Our universal paternity and the very feeling of humanity imposed upon Us, We have not spared Ourselves in Our efforts – as Your Excellency has so courteously recalled – in order, first of all, that the world might continue to enjoy the inestimable benefits of peace and, later, that the conflagration, once it had broken out, might not spread to other countries.

And now, as the clash of arms somberly resounds from hemisphere to hemisphere, it remains for Us only to hasten, with longing desire, the return of peace and, above all, to implore it of God through the persevering insistence of prayer, ready always to offer Our fullest collaboration when, through the overhanging clouds of sorrow and destruction, there may shine upon this war-torn world even a faint ray of encouraging and well-founded hope.

While maintaining this prayerful watch, which, though it adds to Our sorrows, does not diminish Our courage, We are not inactive. Your Excellency is aware of the fact – particularly because you have given Us your support for which We shall be ever grateful – that it is Our undeviating program to do everything in Our power to alleviate the countless sufferings arising from this tragic conflict: sufferings of the prisoners and of the wounded, of families in fear and trembling over the fate of their loved ones, of entire peoples subjected to limitless privations and hardships: sufferings

of the aged, of women, of children who at a moment's notice find themselves deprived of home and possessions.

For Our part, We shall continue to recall to men's minds, as We have done so many times, from this Rome, Holy City, center of the Catholic world and Our Episcopal See, those higher principles of justice and Christian morality without which there is no salvation, and to draw men's spirits anew towards those sentiments of charity and brotherhood without which there can be no peace.

In the ceaseless furtherance of this, Our program, We feel certain that We may count upon the efficacious comprehension of the noble American people and upon the valid collaboration of Your Excellency.

It is in this spirit that, while extending Our fervent good wishes to Your Excellency, at the beginning of this New Year, We pray to God for the prosperity of Your Excellency and that of the great nation over which you preside.

**Actes et Documents du Saint-Siège relatifs à la seconde guerre mondiale, vol 7 p.182-183.*