



The Holy See

DISCOURS DU SAINT-PÈRE JEAN-PAUL II
AU NOUVEL AMBASSADEUR DE SUÈDE PRÈS LE SAINT-SIÈGE,
S.Exc. M. CARL TORSTEN WILHELM ÖRN, À L'OCCASION
DE LA PRÉSENTATION DES LETTRES DE CRÉANCE* *Jeudi 17 novembre 1994*

Mr. Ambassador,

I am pleased to receive Your Excellency at this ceremony which marks the beginning of your mission as Ambassador of Sweden by the presentation of the Letters accrediting you to the Holy See.

I thank you, Mr. Ambassador, for your courteous words just now, and for the message you have conveyed to me from His Majesty Carl XVI Gustav. I would be grateful if you would convey to him my sincere good wishes for his person, for the royal family, for the members of the Government and for all the Swedish people.

I was touched by the interest which your country's authorities pay to the activities of the Holy See, especially with regard to the promotion of human dignity, co-operation and peaceful solutions in international life. They are, in fact, the essential foundations of the Church's mission in the framework of her specific competence within the community of nations.

In your speech, you also expressed the openness of your compatriots to the continent as a whole and the sentiments they feel at this historical moment towards their membership of the European Union. The Holy See is always glad when people agree to join forces. Thus they show their deep wish to work together to further the spiritual and material happiness of their people, to show an ever greater solidarity with other nations, as well as to promote the peace which all men need. The union cannot be disadvantageous to national communities that throughout their history have developed a specific form of political, economic and social life. On the contrary, through this union each plays an increasing role in international life and contributes the elements of its own heritage and social practice to the whole.

At the end of the 20th century, after the trials and wounds which have scarred Europe, it is important to find new ways to live in greater solidarity and harmony; I would like to stress the interest of the Swedish authorities in this process, especially by their participation in organizations such as the European Conference on Security and Co-operation, which you have just mentioned. I do not forget that your country has played a principal role in the difficult search for peace in the countries of the former Yugoslav Republic. May I acknowledge the work patiently accomplished in an effort to resolve the conflicts through dialogue and negotiation, enabling adversaries to discuss matters and to shake hands. I wholeheartedly appeal for an end to hostilities and the arms race in Europe and throughout the world, so that the blind

violence which disfigures man and all humanity may cease.

In your national tradition, I also appreciate the attention you devote to creation and to the protection of the environment. Our technical world tends to forget that we are called to be stewards of the riches of the globe, and that it is our task to preserve them so as to leave an inhabitable earth to future generations.

Although they are few, you know that the Catholics of your country, in collaboration with the Christians of other Churches, are eager to promote the basic spiritual and moral values of a just and equitable social life, values which belong to the Swedish tradition. This is also an opportunity for me to stress the importance of children and the primordial status of the family institution in society. You have recalled, Mr. Ambassador, the Apostolic See's concern for the most destitute men and women in the West and in the developing countries. The strength of a people lies in granting them their place, by just social legislation and the support of other nations, since the greatest treasure of a State is certainly its human resources and the attention paid to the growth and development of individuals.

As your mission begins, I offer you my best wishes and assure you that you will always find in my staff attentive help and cordial understanding.

Upon Your Excellency, your family and the Swedish people, I invoke God's support and
protection.

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