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OFICINA DE PRENSA DE LA SANTA SEDE



BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIEGE
PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLS

BOLLETTINO

SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

N. 0166

Giovedì 22.03.2001

UDIENZA ALLA DELEGAZIONE DELLA CHIESA PRESBITERIANA DEGLI STATI UNITI D'AMERICA

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Alle ore 12.15 di questa mattina, nella Sala dei Papi del Palazzo Apostolico Vaticano, Giovanni Paolo II riceve in Udienza la Delegazione della Chiesa Presbiteriana degli Stati Uniti d'America.

Pubblichiamo di seguito le parole di saluto del Santo Padre alla Delegazione Presbiteriana:

• SALUTO DEL SANTO PADRE

Dear Friends in Christ,

The visit of a delegation from the Presbyterian Church USA is indeed a cause for joy. I greet all of you with affection in the Lord.

Your visit to this City, where the Apostles Peter and Paul shed their blood for the name of Christ, takes place following the year-long celebration of the Great Jubilee of the Incarnation and at the dawn of the Third Christian Millennium. The participation of so many Churches and Ecclesial Communities in a number of the Jubilee events testifies to our common thanksgiving for the great outpouring of grace which accompanied the Lord's first coming. It confirms our commitment to work for full Christian unity as we await his return in glory.

Despite the significant steps taken in recent decades towards the goal of visible unity, we must acknowledge that, "as we cross the threshold of the new millennium, we take with us the sad heritage of the past", and we know that "there is still a long way to go" (*Novo Millennio ineunte*, 48). May we see the future now opening up before us as a summons from the Lord to be increasingly "renewed in the spirit of our minds, putting on the new nature, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness" (cf. *Eph* 4:24). This in fact is a condition of our being able to overcome the barriers which still keep Christians apart.

May your stay, and your conversations with the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity, bear abundant fruit for the ecumenical tasks ahead. Upon you and your families I cordially invoke the joy and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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