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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. 0030

Lunedì 17.01.2000

UDIENZA ALLA DELEGAZIONE ECUMENICA DELLE CHIESE DI FINLANDIA

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Questa mattina poco dopo le ore 12, Giovanni Paolo II ha ricevuto in udienza la Delegazione Ecumenica delle Chiese di Finlandia, ed ha rivolto loro il seguente saluto:

• SALUTO DEL SANTO PADRE

Dear Friends in Christ,

I am especially happy to meet this Ecumenical Delegation from the Churches of Finland on the eve of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Your visit is particularly significant in this year of the Great Jubilee when as Christians we celebrate with special joy and fervour the two thousandth anniversary of the Saviour's birth. Your visit builds upon the promising initiatives that have brought Orthodox, Lutheran and Catholic Christians closer together in recent times. It encourages me to pursue the path towards unity which the Successor of the Apostle Peter must be the first to take. Tomorrow at the Basilica of Saint Paul we will open the Holy Door and together we will sing the praises of Christ who is the doorway into life (cf. *Jn* 10:7). As we pass through the Holy Door, may we take another step closer to the unity in Christ which Peter and Paul proclaimed, and which the Lord himself so clearly wills. I am deeply grateful to you for the commitment of mind and will with which you pursue the ecumenical task. May God the Father bless our efforts!

[00186-02.01] [Original text:English]