

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE
OFICINA DE PRENSA DE LA SANTA SEDE



BUREAU DE PRESSE DU SAINT-SIEGE
PRESSEAMT DES HEILIGEN STUHLS

BOLLETTINO

SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE

N. 0093

Venerdì 21.02.2003

UDIENZA AI PARTECIPANTI ALL'INCONTRO DEI DIRETTORI DIOCESANI DELLE PONTIFICIE OPERE MISSIONARIE DEGLI STATI UNITI D'AMERICA

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Alle 11.30 di questa mattina, nella Sala Clementina del Palazzo Apostolico Vaticano, il Santo Padre Giovanni Paolo II ha ricevuto in Udienza i partecipanti all'Incontro dei Direttori Diocesani delle Pontificie Opere Missionarie degli Stati Uniti d'America ed ha loro rivolto le parole di saluto che pubblichiamo di seguito:

• SALUTO DEL SANTO PADRE

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I am pleased to welcome the Diocesan Directors of the Pontifical Mission Societies in the United States of America on the occasion of your meeting in Rome. It is my great pleasure to join you today in inaugurating a new website which promises to open a fresh chapter in the efforts of your Societies to foster a universal missionary spirit among the whole People of God.

The growth of the Internet in recent years provides an unprecedented opportunity for expanding the Church's missionary outreach, since it has become a primary source of information and communication for so many of our contemporaries, especially the young. It is my hope that the new Pontifical Mission Societies website will awaken in the Catholics of the United States a deeper appreciation of the Church's universal missionary mandate and a greater awareness of the rich variety of cultures and peoples in which the Gospel of Jesus Christ continues to take root in our time. I trust that the new site will draw many people to a deeper faith in Christ, lead to an increase of missionary vocations and call forth a greater commitment to the proclamation of the Gospel *ad gentes* and the new evangelization of traditionally Christian countries.

Dear friends, in the wake of the Great Jubilee, the Church is called to contemplate anew the face of Christ in order to carry out with greater enthusiasm his command to make disciples of all nations (cf. *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 58). May the work of your Societies be a true leaven of missionary zeal among the Catholics of the United States, and yield abundant fruit for the spread of Christ's Kingdom in the new frontiers now opening up before us. Commending you and your important apostolate to the prayers of Mary, Mother of the Church, I

cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing as a pledge of strength and peace in the Lord.

[00276-02.02] [Original text: English]
