

Pontiff's Apostolic Letter on Jerusalem

Vatican City (NC) — Here is an NC News English translation of Pope John Paul II's apostolic letter on Jerusalem, written in Latin. It was released April 19 and dated April 20, Good Friday. The title is "Redemptionis Anno" (Year of the Redemption).

To the bishops, priests, Religious families and the faithful of the whole Catholic Church on the city of Jerusalem, which is for all those who believe in God a sacred good and the desired meeting place of peace for the peoples of the Middle East:

Venerable brothers and dear sons and daughters, greetings and the apostolic blessing:

At the end of the jubilee year of Redemption, I think of the unique land which is situated where Europe, Asia and Africa meet, and where the Redemption of mankind has been consummated "once for all" (Rom. 6:10; Heb. 7:27, 9:12, 10:10).

It is the land which we call holy, since it was Christ's earthly home on which he walked and where he "proclaimed the good news of the kingdom and cured the people of every disease and illness" (Mt. 4:23).

During this year especially I desired to feel the same joy and emotion of heart which my predecessor, Pope Paul VI, experienced when he went to the Holy Land and to Jerusalem in 1964.

Although I could not be there in person, I nevertheless in my mind toured this land where our reconciliation with God was accomplished, in order to implore the Prince of Peace to grant us the precious gift of peace and of Redemption, which is so earnestly longed for by mankind, by the families and nations, and above all by the people who live in that very region.

I think especially of the city of Jerusalem where Jesus, the Redeemer, offered up his life, "made the two of us one by breaking down the barrier of hostility that kept us apart... Reconciling both of us to God in one body... (He) put that enmity to death" (Eph. 2:14-16).

Jerusalem, before becoming the city of Jesus the Redeemer, had been the historical site of God's biblical revelation, almost the meeting place of heaven and earth, where more than in any other place God has spoken to mankind.

It is looked upon by the Christians with religious affection and anxiety, since Christ's word resounded there so often, since the great events of the Redemption, the Passion, death and Resurrection of the Lord were accomplished there. It was in Jerusalem that the first Christian community arose, and there the Church has remained present through the centuries, despite long-standing hardships.

It is ardently loved by the Hebrews, who have always preserved her memory, emphasized through many signs and monuments from the times of David, who had chosen it as his residence, and of Solomon, who had built the temple. Therefore it is thought of daily by the Hebrews, and for them it signifies the existence and freedom of this nation.

The Moslems, too, call Jerusalem "holy" and show their fervent love which has been continuous since the origins of Mohammed's teaching. This love derives from the fact that the Moslems hold many places there as destinations of their sacred pilgrimages, and that they have been living in that city for more than 1,000 years with almost no interruption.

In addition to these distinguished and illustrious

monuments, Jerusalem shelters numerous communities of the faithful, which are full of life and stand as a source of hope to nations all over the world. People consider the Holy City to be, in a certain sense, their spiritual patrimony and the symbol of peace and harmony.

Jerusalem, since it is the beloved spiritual home of all spiritual sons of Abraham, and since it is the site where, according to faith, God's infinite transcendence meets creation, represents the symbol of union, communion and peace of the entire human family.

Thus the Holy City earnestly invites all mankind to peace, especially those who adore the one and great God, the merciful Father of the peoples. But we have also to state that Jerusalem continues to be the reason for daily strife, violence and selfish claims.

These circumstances and thoughts make us recall more the saying of the prophet, "For Zion's sake I will not be silent, for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet, until her vindication shines forth like the dawn and her victory like a burning torch." (Is. 62:1).

We are thinking of the day, and asking for it in our prayers, when we all will be so "taught by God" (Jn. 6:45) that we shall be able to listen to his message of reconciliation and peace. We are thinking of the day when Hebrews, Christians and Moslems will greet each other in Jerusalem with this salutation of peace, with which the risen Christ addressed his disciples, "Peace be with you" (Jn. 20:19).

The Roman pontiffs, especially this century, have always been watching the bitter events which have bound Jerusalem for many decades and have followed with attentive care the various statements of international organizations which have sought to define the role of the Holy City.

On numerous occasions the Holy See has called for and encouraged prompt decisions which would resolve this entangled and difficult situation. The Holy See did so not only out of its general concern for peace among the nations, but also out of spiritual, historical reasons and other reasons pertaining to doctrine and to faith.

All mankind, and especially Christians, Hebrews and Moslems, the peoples and nations that are brothers in the faith in Jerusalem, must be involved in this question, and they must do all that they can to save the holy and unique character of this city. Not only the monuments and holy sites but also the entire history of Jerusalem and the existence of its religious communities cannot fail to move and to be felt in the hearts of all, evoking concern for Jerusalem's present situation and for its future.

Good will and extensive consultations must indeed find a just and solid means with which to harmonize steadily the contrasting desires and inclinations and to establish them safely in a manner which is becoming and efficacious. These means should lead to a constitution which respects the gathering of peoples in such a way that none of them will dominate and thus bring about discrimination.

I consider it to be my duty, one which cannot be postponed, to remind the Christian communities and all those who profess their faith in one God and are therefore morally obliged to defend the high dignity of man, of the leading role the Jerusalem situation plays in establishing a just peace in the Middle East.

I am firmly convinced that the religious identity of the city, and especially the following of a common monotheistic belief, are able to indicate a way in which harmony may be instituted among those who, for various

reasons, consider the Holy City to be theirs.

I know well that when the searching for a fitting solution to the Jerusalem problem is abandoned, the idle delay works against the greatly desired calm and the reaching of an agreement in the conflict which troubles the whole Middle Eastern region.

Now I wish also to recall that in this same region two peoples, the Palestinians and the Israelites, have been opposed to each other during the past decades because of an enmity which seems impossible to overcome.

The Church looks upon Christ the Redeemer and discerns his images in every man. It therefore invokes peace and reconciliation for the peoples of that land which has been his.

For the Jewish people who live in the Israelite nation and guard in this same region so precious an evidence of its history and of its faith, I ask for the desired safety and the just tranquility which is the prerogative of every single nation and is necessary for life and progress in every form of society.

The Palestinian people who have their historical origins in that region and who have lived as nomads for decades have a natural right, based on justice, to acquire a homeland and to live there in harmony and tranquility with the other peoples of the same region.

All the nations of the Middle East, who defend their patrimony of spiritual values, will not succeed in overcoming the actual tragic vicissitudes — I mention the tormented Lebanon — if they do not discover the true reason of their history, which, by means of their belief in one God, calls them to associate in harmony and mutual agreement.

I also wish to remind political leaders who govern nations or preside over international organizations of the conditions of the City of Jerusalem and the peoples who live there. No one may forget the manifold significance of faith and of human worship, which are found in the Holy City and are able to contribute to the cause of harmony and peace.

On this Good Friday, when we solemnly commemorate the passion and death of our Savior, I invite you all, venerable brothers in the episcopate, all priests, all Religious families, and all the faithful all over the world, to remember especially in your prayers a just solution to the Jerusalem question and to the cause of the entire Holy Land, so that peace will be re-established in the Middle East.

At the end of the jubilee year of the Redemption, which has been celebrated with great spiritual joy in Rome and in all the dioceses of the Catholic Church, Jerusalem rises as the true and best goal to which we shall turn our thoughts of love and gratitude because of the splendid gift of the Redemption, which the Son of Man has gained in the Holy City for every person.

Since the fruit of the Redemption is the reconciliation of man with God and of every person with his brothers and sisters, we must earnestly pray that also in Jerusalem, in the region holy to Jesus, those who believe in God may find peace and reconciliation after such sad discords and dissensions.

I joyfully impart to all of you my apostolic blessing.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, on Good Friday, April 20, 1984, in the sixth year of my pontificate.

(Signed) John Paul II

AT YOUR PARISH



St. Salome

St. Salome School eighth graders (left to right) Vicki Howard, Joe Piendel, Cindy Skelton, Chris Mangione, Brian Hauer, Chris Coccia and Lisa Berritella, solve a problem based on the novel "Moby Dick," for which they took third place at the regional competition of Olympics of the Mind. The pupils represented the Diocese of Rochester at the event which drew 1,000 children. Sister Kathryn Wahl, principal, noted, "The students have had an invaluable experience. They have learned to work as a team and have come to truly appreciate each other's individual talents. The entire school community supported the teams and we are all proud of their success."

Corpus Christi

Two fund-raisers are on the agenda for Corpus Christi School: a euchre tournament, 12:45 p.m., Sunday, May 6 in the school hall; a Gospel concert featuring the Alvin Parris Singers and the RIT Gospel Choir, 7:30 p.m., May 11 in the church. A \$10 donation will be asked for the tournament; \$5 for the concert, with children admitted for \$2. Further information is available by calling 325-6368.

Assumption

Fairport — The Church of the Assumption will hold its first Spiritual Gifts Workshop, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m., Saturday, May 5 in the church hall. A fee of \$5 (\$6 for non-parishioners) will cover lunch and supplies.

St. Charles

"1984 Olympics" is the theme for St. Charles School's annual penny bazaar, 10-11:15 a.m.; 1-3 p.m.; and 7-9 p.m., May 11. Among the attractions will be a white elephant booth, baked goods, cake walk, a fish pond and a candy store. Proceeds from the event will be used to enlarge the computer program.

Lady of Mercy

Our Lady of Mercy Church will hold its annual garage sale, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Saturday, May 5 at 36 Armstrong Road. Featured items include household goods, antiques, white elephants, and "junque."

Holy Ghost

Coldwater — Computer instruction will be a feature of a new pre-school program slated to open Sept. 10 at Holy Ghost School. Morning sessions will be held 9:30 a.m.-noon, Tuesdays and Thursdays for three-year-olds; and Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays for four-year-olds. A limit of 20 children will be accepted in each class. The registration fee is \$15 and information is available from Carol Schmitz, 426-1289, or 247-3535.

In other parish news, it was learned that three Girl Scouts have earned the Silver Award, one of the highest awards that can be earned by Cadettes. The recipients are Kendra Bush, Michelle Stalker and Jennifer Sickles, members of Troop 578. They were given the awards at a special dinner during Girl Scout Week.

Blessed Sacrament

"The Sound of Music" will be performed 7:30 p.m., May 4 and 5 in the Blessed Sacrament Church auditorium. Tickets are \$2 for adults, \$1 for senior citizens and children.

St. Margaret Mary

The Home School Association of St. Margaret Mary Parish will hold a sock hop, 8 p.m., Saturday, May 12 in the school gymnasium, 400 Rogers Pkwy. Tickets are \$2.50 in advance, \$3 at the door. Ticket information is available from Sue O'Neil, 266-2491; Jackie Cushman, 338-1098.

Advisory

Parish publicity agents are advised that the Courier-Journal is legally restrained from publishing any notices of games of chance or the prizes won at such games. It is further noted that the Courier-Journal deadline is Thursday noon preceding Wednesday publication. Notices must be written and at 114 S. Union St., Rochester, N.Y. 14607 by that time.

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