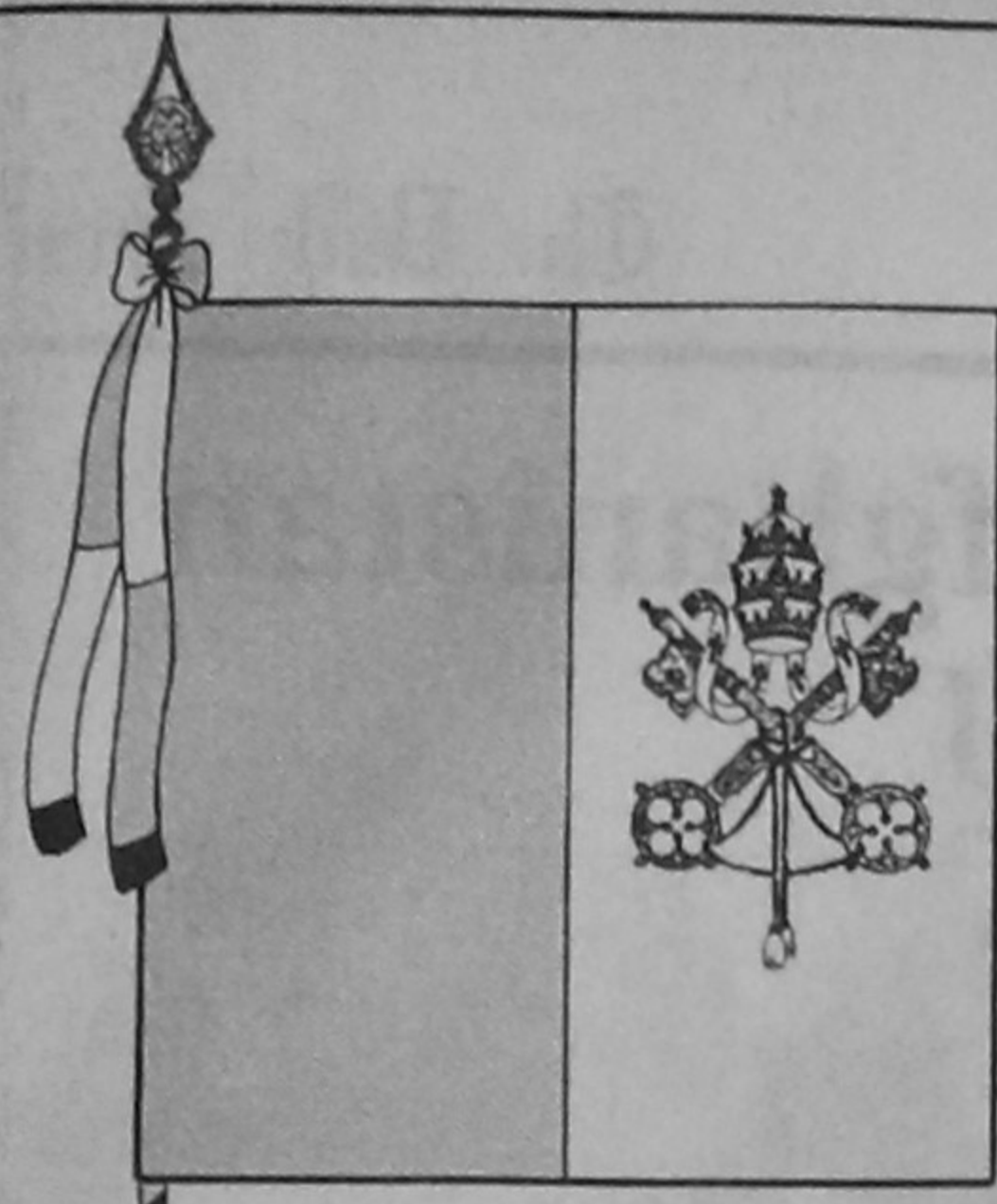


# 23<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of the Pontificate of His Holiness John Paul II (National Day of Holy See)

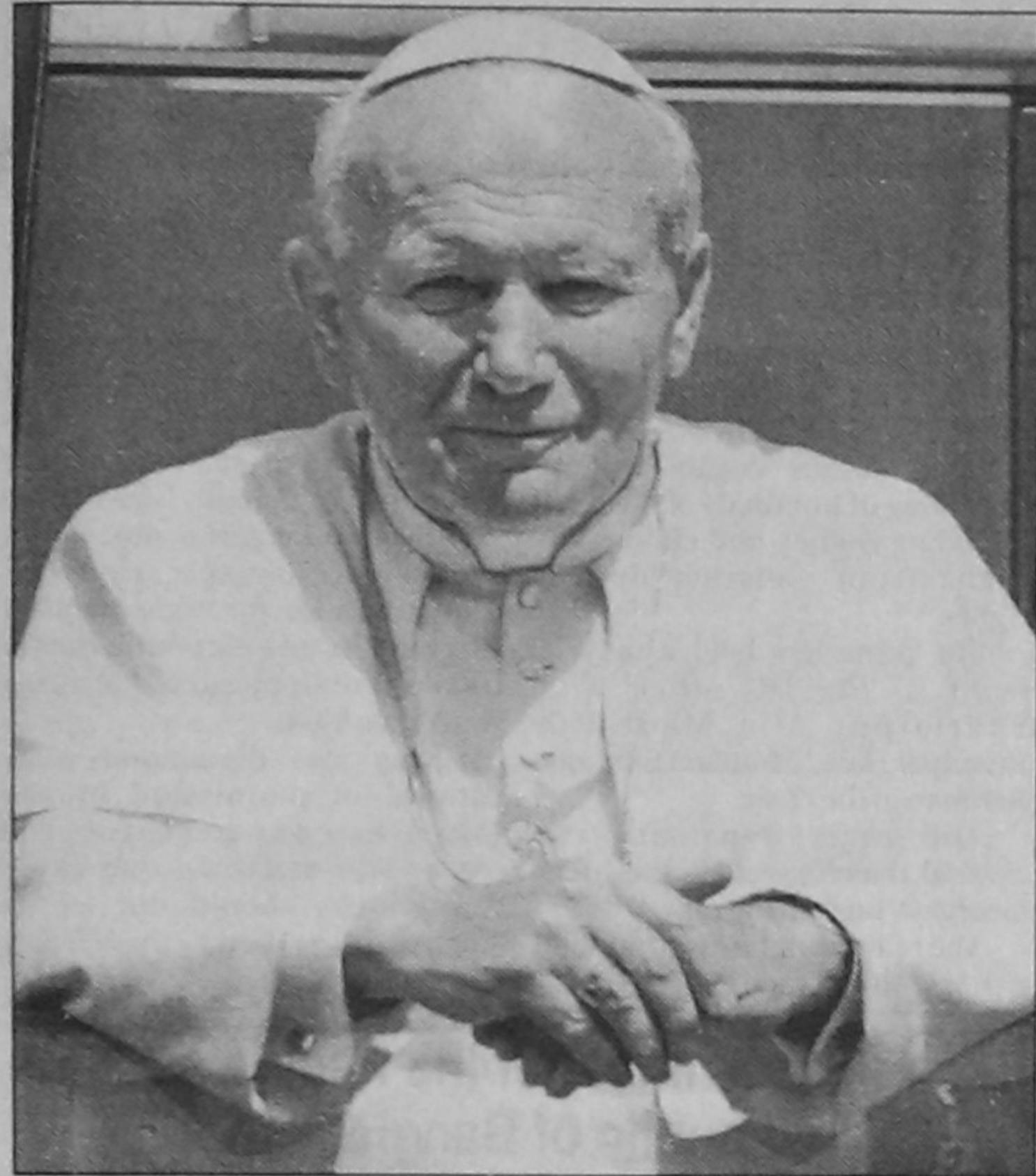


The Daily Star

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

October 22, 2001

## Pope John Paul II's Peace Message for the Year 2001 *Dialogue of cultures for a civilization of love and peace*



the level of both individuals and social groups". "A person necessarily lives within a specific culture", the Pope says, adding that people are marked by the culture that they receive through their family, education, environmental influence and the territory in which they live. "The need to accept one's own culture as an important element of one's personality, especially in the initial stages of life, is a fact of universal experience" from which "people acquire a sense of their nationality".

While it is certainly important to be able to "appreciate the values of one's own culture, there is also a need to recognize that every culture, as a typically human and historically conditioned reality, necessarily has its limitations". Nevertheless it is possible to recognise in cultures "significant common elements".

In the past, cultural differences have often been a source of conflicts and even wars, due to "the aggressive claims of some cultures against others", the Pope says. Many today voice concern for certain new tendencies towards "radicalization of identity" and "slavish conformity of cultures, to cultural models deriving from a secularized concept of life, a concept sustained and reinforced by the influence of a powerful mass media".

Precisely for this reason "dialogue between cultures emerges as an essential demand of human nature itself". The Pope stresses that the concept of the unity of the human race "never implies uniformity or enforced homogenization or assimilation; rather it expresses the convergence of a variety of differences, and is therefore a sign of richness and a promise of growth". Dialogue is the context for such

growth and "a privileged means for building the civilization of love and peace".

The Pope's Message speaks of certain developments in the world today that can have far reaching consequences: for example, "the impact of new communications technology on the lives of individuals and peoples... Such technology is shaping society along the lines of new cultural models which more or less break with those of the past". A few countries now hold a "monopoly on these cultural 'industries', which can be a powerful factor in undermining cultural distinctness". Also noted is the "complex question of migration, which is an important social phenomenon of our time. On this point, the Pope emphasizes the principle of "respect due to the dignity of every human person", while stressing as well that a culture of openness must be able to combine "the concern for identity with the willingness to engage in dialogue".

Care must be taken to safeguard a certain "cultural equilibrium" in each region, by reference to the culture which has prevalently marked its development. This equilibrium, even while welcoming minorities and respecting their basic rights, would argue for the continued existence and development of a particular "cultural profile", that is, the basic heritage of language, traditions and values.

It is necessary to foster people's awareness of the common values in cultures "in order to nurture that universal cultural 'soil' which makes for fruitful and constructive dialogue". The Pope's Message lists some of the values which render cultural dialogue possible and

realistic: for example, solidarity and the promotion of justice; peace, "the primary objective of every society and of national and international life", which must go hand in hand with disarmament; and respect for life, "the most sacred and inviolable earthly reality", now threatened by a culture of "murder, suicide, abortion, euthanasia... and irresponsible practices of genetic engineering, etc."

Having a particular role to play, the Pope says, is education "which contributes to building a more united and peaceful world and to affirming an integral humanism, open to life's ethical and religious dimension"; and, last but not least, forgiveness and reconciliation, "necessary to overcome conflict and hatred": Pope John Paul makes a specific "appeal to believers in God to become witnesses to and ambassadors of forgiveness and reconciliation".

The Pope's Peace Message ends with a special call to young people whom the Pope describes as the "living stones in the building of the civilization of love". He entrusts the young of the world with the "high and exhilarating task ... of becoming 'men and women capable of solidarity, peace and love of life, with respect for everyone'. He invites them to be "craftsmen of a new humanity, where brothers and sisters members all of the same human family are able at last, through 'a dialogue of cultures' to live in 'a civilization of love and peace'".

### MESSAGE

OF THE PAPAL NUNCIO TO BANGLADESH  
ARCHBISHOP EDWARD J. ADAMS

**K**AROL Jozef Wojtyla, known as John Paul II since his election to the papacy in 1978, is the "Holy Father" to the world's billion Catholics. He is the 263rd successor to St. Peter, the first non-Italian Pope in about 500 years and the first Pope in history to come from Poland. He has been Pope six years longer than Pius XI (1922-1939), four years longer than Pius XII (1939-1958) and eight years longer than Paul VI (1963-1978). That makes his pontificate the longest in the last hundred years and the sixth longest in history.

The public impact of John Paul II during these past twenty-three years suggests that politics or economics (or a combination of both) is not the only engine of history. The revolution of conscience that Pope Wojtyla helped ignite, and which some feel made the Revolution of 1989 easier, has another explanation. What the Pope has done is to remind us that the power of the human spirit can also bring about even dramatic historical change. By demonstrating in action the linkage between profound moral conviction and effective political power, this Pope has helped restore politics to its true dignity and help delineate its proper sphere.

As Bishop of Rome and sovereign of the Vatican City micro-state, John Paul II has no military or economic might at his disposal. The Holy See maintains an extensive network of diplomatic relations and holds Permanent Observer status at the United Nations. But whatever

influence the Pope has had through these channels comes from his strength of moral persuasion and nothing else.

Perhaps what makes the Pope credible is his obvious love for humanity. He was, and is, a courageous opponent of those who refuse to recognize the truth about the human person and who deny individuals their God-given dignity and freedom. Because of this, John Paul continues to be a defender of those human values that are at risk of being compromised, now also by a modern techno-civilization. Pope John Paul II is seen by many as a universal moral reference point, someone who acts in world affairs according to the logic of the truth rather than according to the rules of politics or the market.

In fact, some would see his continued advocacy of the truth as this Pope's principal contribution. At the start of a new century and a new millennium, when many have said that it is impossible to have truths to hold on to, John Paul II continues to affirm that truth does exist: the truth about man; a truth that transcends particular individuals and cultures and applies to all human beings at all times and all places, a truth that is the natural underpinning for all human rights.

The Pope finds himself today among the handful of people who are proponents of reason and humanism, a radical humanism which is inspired by, and directed to, God. With no other arms than his word and his prayer, the Pope tire-

lessly calls everyone to the requirements of the human person and society, to what is just and correct, to truth and freedom.

His position as Sovereign of the 108 acres that constitute the independent Vatican City State gives John Paul II the base for exercising his spiritual authority for the world's Catholics, but also the liberty he requires to speak on behalf of the human person. He need submit to no constraints except those of love.

I have the great honour to represent Pope John Paul II in this Country. Once again, in his name, I take the opportunity to greet all the people of Bangladesh and wish them well-being, prosperity and abundant blessings from the Almighty.



E. J. Adams  
Apostolic Nuncio

**P**EACE in the new millennium will come about only if humanity shares the ideal of "a truly universal brotherhood". This is the opening statement in Pope John Paul II's Message for the World Day of Peace 2001.

In his Message, which bears a very topical title: Dialogue between cultures for a civilization of love and peace, the Pope says that dialogue is "an essential requirement" for relations between cultures, in an era

of globalization and migration; he notes the dangers of the radicalization of cultural identities and suggests that a common heritage of values (solidarity, justice, peace, respect for life, education, forgiveness and reconciliation) should form the basis for a family of cultures and a universal, human brotherhood.

Pope John Paul defines culture as "the form of man's self-expression in his journey through history, on

### POPE'S APPEAL FOR PEACE

Text of John Paul II's remarks made in Astana, during his visit to Kazakhstan: 23 September 2001

"FROM this city, from Kazakhstan, a country that is an example of harmony between men and women of different origins and beliefs, I wish to make an earnest call to everyone, Christians and the followers of other religions, that we work together to build a world without violence, a world that loves life, and grows in justice and solidarity. We must not let what has happened lead to a deepening of divisions. Religion

must never be used as a reason for conflict.

From this place, I invite both Christians and Muslims to raise an intense prayer to the One, Almighty God whose children we all are, that the supreme good of peace may reign in the world. May people everywhere, strengthened by divine wisdom, work for a civilisation of love, in which there is no room for hatred, discrimination or violence. With all my heart I beg God to keep the world in peace."

### The Holy See and the Vatican Diplomatic Corps

The Vatican maintains Diplomatic Relations with 172 Countries

**T**HE figure of an ambassador to the Vatican originated in the fifteenth century. It happened when Spain, France, the Republic of Venice and the major European powers of the time began appointing stable missions to the Holy See (from the Latin Sancta Sedes, the "Chair of Peter") while receiving Apostolic Nuncios as envoys from the Pope in their own capital cities.

The shape of the diplomatic corps accredited to the Vatican has changed considerably since the 1400s. The most obvious change is numerical, as today 172 countries from around the world have full diplomatic exchange with the Holy See at Ambassadorial level.

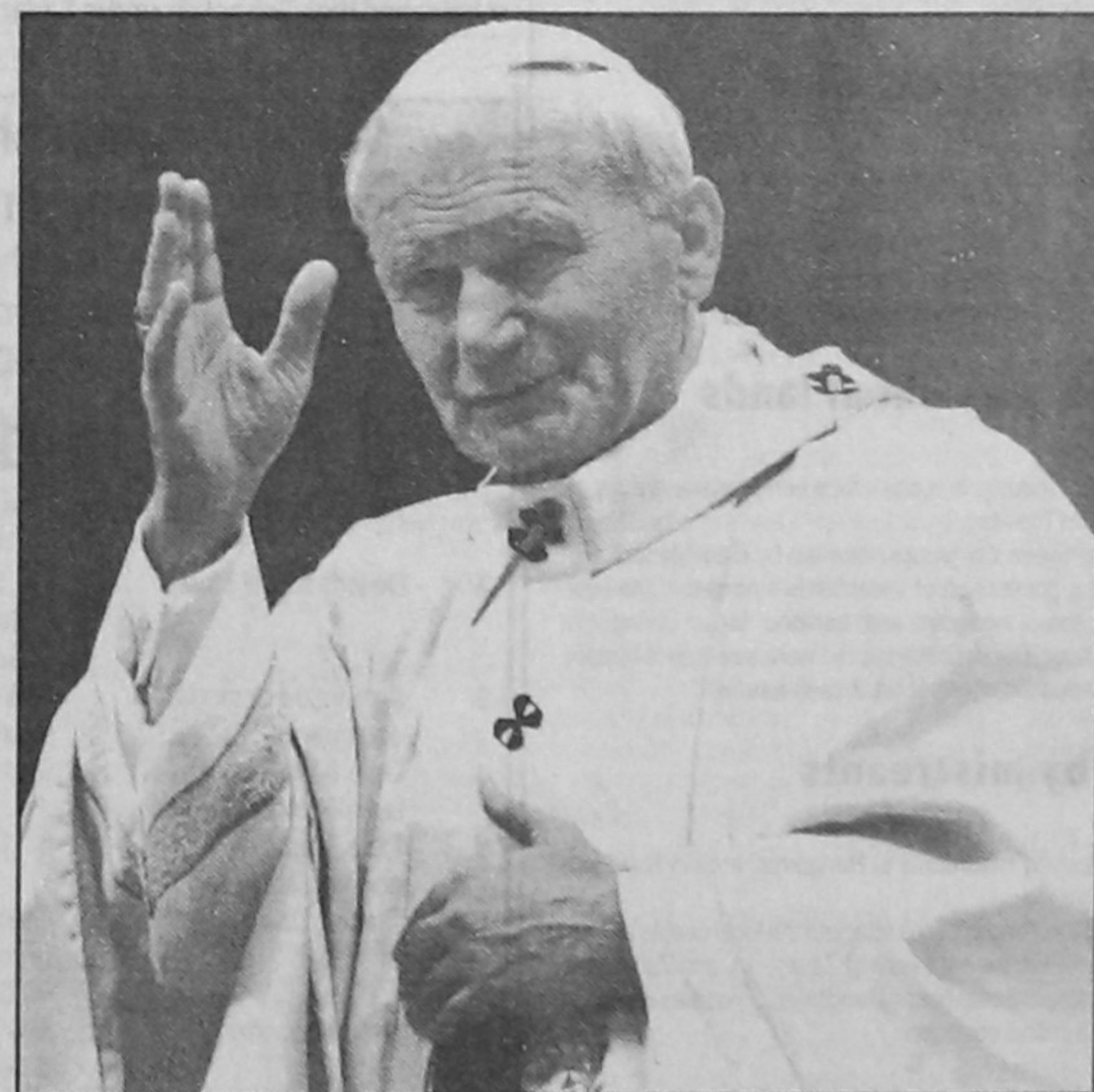
Added to these are the special agreements between the Vatican and Russia, Switzerland and the Palestinian Liberation Organization. A fourth exceptional case is the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, whose sovereignty is internationally recognized, although it has only a castle on the island of Malta as its territory.

In its turn, the Holy See has its own diplomatic service with a corps of some 250 people representing the Pope throughout the world. This year, the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy, the school which prepares Vatican diplomats, is celebrating its 300th anniversary.

The Apostolic Nunciature in Dhaka, or, as it is known here, "the Vatican Embassy", had its beginning at the time of Bangladesh's liberation, when Pope Paul VI sent his personal delegation for the occasion. The Government of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh welcomed this gesture of solidarity and indicated its desire to establish diplomatic relations. An agreement was announced in September 1972, and on 2 February of the following year, an Apostolic Nunciature was set up. The first Papal Representative, Australian Archbishop (now Cardinal) Edward Cassidy, arrived in Dhaka on 4 April 1973.

The Vatican is determined to maintain cordial and official relations with all countries. As Cardinal Angelo Sodano, the top exponent of Vatican foreign policy stated not long ago, the Vatican furthers a strategy that ultimately seeks "to carry the Culture of Peace to the life of individuals and nations".

**felicitations**  
to  
**His Holiness Pope John Paul II**  
on the  
**National Day of the Holy See/Vatican**  
&  
**23rd Anniversary of the Election of His Holiness**



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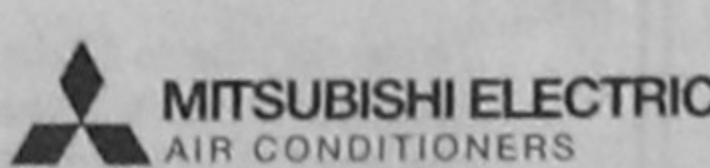
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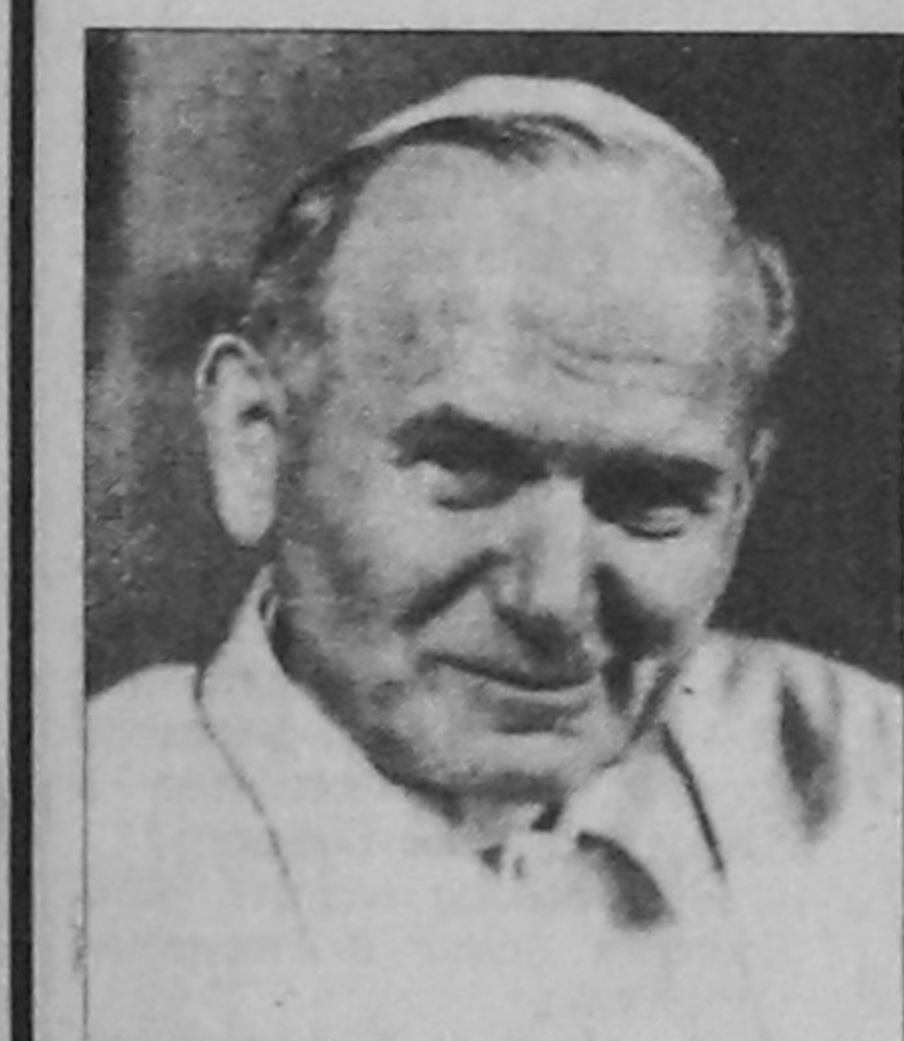
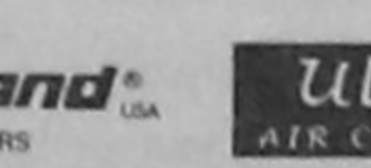
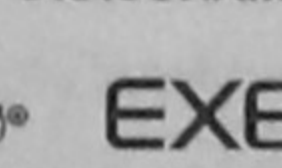
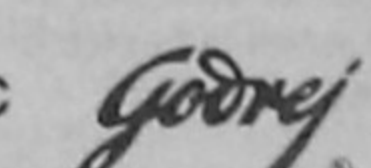
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"May God bless all who promote peace and justice."

—Pope John Paul II

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