

origins

CNS documentary service

The European Parliament Must Bridge Divisions, Foster Peace

Pope Francis

Protecting human dignity and developing a culture of human rights must be the charge of the European Parliament, Pope Francis said in a Nov. 25 address to the international body in Strasbourg, France. Decrying injustice and persecution against religious minorities in various parts of the world, and Christians in particular, he said, "A Europe capable of appreciating its religious roots and of grasping their fruitfulness and potential will be all the more immune to the many forms of extremism spreading in the world today." The pope evoked the image of a fresco by Raphael

"I would like as a pastor to offer a message of hope and encouragement to all the citizens of Europe."

that depicts Plato and Aristotle, with one philosopher looking to the heavens and the other directly at the viewer. "This strikes me as a very apt image of Europe and her history, made up of the constant interplay between heaven and earth," he said. Pope Francis said the European Parliament he visited — with 28 member states representing 500 million people — differs greatly from the one Pope John Paul II visited more than 25 years earlier. He called for a "return to the firm conviction of the founders of the European Union, who envisioned a future based on the capacity to work together in bridging divisions and in fostering peace and fellowship among all the peoples of this continent." Pope Francis' address, given in Italian, follows, translation copyright © 2014 by Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

■ thank you for inviting me to address this institution that is fundamental to the life of the European Union and for giving me this opportunity to speak, through you, to the more than 500 million citizens whom you represent in the 28 member states. I am especially grateful to you, Mr. President, for your warm words of welcome in the name of the entire assembly.

My visit comes more than a quarter of a century after that of Pope John Paul II. Since then, much has changed throughout Europe and the world as a whole. The opposing blocs that then divided the continent in two no longer exist, and gradually the hope is being realized that "Europe, endowed with

continued on page 458



contents

- 457 The European Parliament Must Bridge Divisions, Foster Peace
by Pope Francis
- 463 The Council of Europe: Seeking Peace in a New Era
by Pope Francis
- 466 Turkey Visit: Address to President and Civil Authorities
by Pope Francis
- 468 Turkey Visit: Address to Ministry of Religious Affairs
by Pope Francis
- 469 Turkey Visit: Mass in Holy Spirit Cathedral
by Pope Francis
- 470 Turkey Visit: Ecumenical Prayer Service
by Pope Francis
- 472 Datebook
- 472 On File

December 11, 2014
Volume 44
Number 28