

APOSTOLIC NUNCIATURE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 1792 June 22, 2012

Your Eminence:

On behalf of the Secretariat of State of the Holy See and pursuant to your letter dated March 29, 2012, I have the honor to transmit the following message:

His Eminence Cardinal Donald Wuerl Archbishop of Washington

His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI has asked me to convey his warm greetings and the assurance of his spiritual closeness to you and to all assembled at the Basilica of the National Shrine in Washington for the concluding Mass of the "Fortnight for Freedom" celebrated throughout the United States in these days. In union with all those, Catholics and non-Catholics alike, who have taken part in this great symphony of prayer for the nation and its deaders, he expresses his hope that the faithful will be strengthened in their religious and patriotic commitment to uphold that most cherished of American freedoms, freedom of religion. At the beginning of his Pastoral Visit to the United States in 2008, His Holiness recalled that the American experience confirms that "freedom is not only a gift, but a summons to personal responsibility...it is a challenge held out to each generation, and it must constantly be won over for the cause of good (16 April 2008). Conscious of the grave challenges of the present moment, the Holy Father encourages the American Catholic community, and young people in particular, to continue to bring the wisdom and insight born of their faith to the task of building a society worthy of America's highest moral and constitutional principles. Commending all associated with the prayer initiative to the protection of Mary, Mother of the Church, His Holiness cordially imparts his Apostolic Blessing as a pledge of strength and peace in the Lord.

> Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone Secretary of State

Offering my own prayerful best wishes, I remain,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Inlo Illaire Veano

Archbishop Carlo Maria Vigano Apostolic Nuncio

HIS EMINENCE DONALD CARDINAL WUERL ARCHBISHOP OF WASHINGTON