

***AD BEATISSIMI APOSTOLORUM***  
ENCYCLICAL OF POPE BENEDICT XV  
APPEALING FOR PEACE  
TO OUR VENERABLE BRETHREN THE PATRIARCHS,  
PRIMATES, ARCHBISHOPS, BISHOPS,  
AND OTHER LOCAL ORDINARIES  
IN PEACE AND COMMUNION WITH THE APOSTOLIC SEE.

November 1, 1914

*Venerable Brethren,  
Greeting and Apostolic Benediction.*

Raised by the inscrutable counsel of Divine Providence without any merit of our own to the Chair of the Prince of the Apostles, we hearkened to those words of Christ Our Lord addressed to Peter, "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep" (*John* xxii. 15-17) as spoken to Ourselves, and at once with affectionate love we cast our eyes over the flock committed to our care - a numberless flock indeed, comprising in different ways the whole human race. For the whole of mankind was freed from the slavery of sin by the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ as their ransom, and there is no one who is excluded from the benefit of this Redemption: hence the Divine Pastor has one part of the human race already happily sheltered within the fold, the others He declares He will lovingly urge to enter therein: "and other sheep I have, that are not of this fold; them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice" (*John* x. 16).

2. We make no secret, Venerable Brethren, that the first sentiment we felt in our heart, prompted certainly by the goodness of God, was the inexpressible yearning of a loving desire for the salvation of all mankind, and in assuming the Pontificate our sincere wish was that of Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, when about to die on the Cross: "Holy Father, keep them in Thy name, whom Thou hast given me" (*John* xvii. 11).

3. But as soon as we were able from the height of Apostolic dignity to survey at a glance the course of human affairs, our eyes were met by the sad conditions of human society, and we could not but be filled with bitter sorrow. For what could prevent the soul of the common Father of all being most deeply distressed by the spectacle presented by Europe, nay, by the whole world, perhaps the saddest and most mournful spectacle of which there is any record. Certainly those days would seem to have come upon us of which Christ Our Lord foretold: "You shall hear of wars and rumours of wars - for nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom" (*Matt.* xxiv, 6, 7). On every side the dread phantom of war holds sway: there is scarce room for another thought in the minds of men. The combatants are the greatest and wealthiest nations of the earth; what wonder, then, if, well provided with the most awful weapons modern military science has devised, they strive to destroy one another with refinements of horror. There is no limit to the measure of ruin and of slaughter; day by day the earth is drenched with newly-shed blood, and is covered with the bodies of the wounded and of the slain. Who would imagine as we see them thus filled with hatred of one another, that they are all of one common stock, all of the same nature, all members of the same human society? Who would recognize brothers, whose

Father is in Heaven? Yet, while with numberless troops the furious battle is engaged, the sad cohorts of war, sorrow and distress swoop down upon every city and every home; day by day the mighty number of widows and orphans increases, and with the interruption of communications, trade is at a standstill; agriculture is abandoned; the arts are reduced to inactivity; the wealthy are in difficulties; the poor are reduced to abject misery; all are in distress.

4. Moved by these great evils, we thought it our duty, at the very outset of our Supreme Pontificate, to recall the last words of our Predecessor of illustrious and holy memory, and by repeating them once more to begin our own Apostolic Ministry; and we implored Kings and rulers to consider the floods of tears and of blood already poured out, and to hasten to restore to the nations the blessings of peace. God grant by His mercy and blessing, that the glad tidings the Angels brought at the birth of the divine Redeemer of mankind may soon echo forth as we His Vicar enter upon His Work: "on earth peace to men of good will" (*Luke ii. 14*). We implore those in whose hands are placed the fortunes of nations to hearken to Our voice. Surely there are other ways and means whereby violated rights can be rectified. Let them be tried honestly and with good will, and let arms meanwhile be laid aside. It is impelled with love of them and of all mankind, without any personal interest whatever, that We utter these words. Let them not allow these words of a friend and of a father to be uttered in vain.

5. But it is not the present sanguinary strife alone that distresses the nations and fills Us with anxiety and care. There is another evil raging in the very inmost heart of human society, a source of dread to all who really think, inasmuch as it has already brought, and will bring, many misfortunes upon nations, and may rightly be considered to be the root cause of the present awful war. For ever since the precepts and practices of Christian wisdom ceased to be observed in the ruling of states, it followed that, as they contained the peace and stability of institutions, the very foundations of states necessarily began to be shaken. Such, moreover, has been the change in the ideas and the morals of men, that unless God comes soon to our help, the end of civilization would seem to be at hand. Thus we see the absence from the relation of men of mutual love with their fellow men; the authority of rulers is held in contempt; injustice reigns in relations between the classes of society; the striving for transient and perishable things is so keen, that men have lost sight of the other and more worthy goods they have to obtain. It is under these four headings that may be grouped, We consider, the causes of the serious unrest pervading the whole of human society. All then must combine to get rid of them by again bringing Christian principles into honour, if We have any real desire for the peace and harmony of human society.

6. Our Lord Jesus Christ came down from Heaven for the very purpose of restoring amongst men the Kingdom of Peace, which the envy of the devil had destroyed, and it was His will that it should rest on no other foundation than that of brotherly love. These are His own oft-repeated words: "A new commandment I give unto you: That you love one another" (*John xiv. 34*); "This is my commandment that you love one another" (*John xv. 12*); "These things I command you, that you love one another" (*John xv. 17*); as though His one office and purpose was to bring men to mutual love. He used every kind of argument to bring about that effect. He bids us all look up to Heaven: "For one is your Father who is in Heaven" (*Matt. xxiii 9*); He teaches all men, without distinction of nationality or of language, or of ideas, to pray in the words: "Our Father, who are in Heaven" (*Matt. vi. 9*); nay, more, He tells us that our Heavenly Father in distributing

the blessings of nature makes no distinction of our deserts: "Who maketh His sun to rise upon the good and bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust" (*Matt.* v. 45). He bids us be brothers one to another, and calls us His brethren: "All you are brethren" (*Matt.* xxiii. 8); "that He might be the first-born amongst many brethren" (*Rom.* vii. 29). In order the more to stimulate us to brotherly love, even towards those whom our natural pride despises, it is His will that we should recognize the dignity of His own very self in the meanest of men: "As long as you did it to one of these My least brethren, you did it to Me" (*Matt.* xxv. 40). At the close of His life did He not most earnestly beg of His Father, that as many as should believe in Him should all be one in the bond of charity? "As thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee" (*John* xvii. 21). And finally, as He was hanging from the cross, He poured out His blood over us all, whence being as it were compacted and fitly joined together in one body, we should love one another, with a love like that which one member bears to another in the same body.

7. Far different from this is the behaviour of men today. Never perhaps was there more talking about the brotherhood of men than there is today; in fact, men do not hesitate to proclaim that striving after brotherhood is one of the greatest gifts of modern civilization, ignoring the teaching of the Gospel, and setting aside the work of Christ and of His Church. But in reality never was there less brotherly activity amongst men than at the present moment. Race hatred has reached its climax; peoples are more divided by jealousies than by frontiers; within one and the same nation, within the same city there rages the burning envy of class against class; and amongst individuals it is self-love which is the supreme law over-ruling everything.

8. You see, Venerable Brethren, how necessary it is to strive in every possible way that the charity of Jesus Christ should once more rule supreme amongst men. That will ever be our own aim; that will be the keynote of Our Pontificate. And We exhort you to make that also the end of your endeavours. Let us never cease from reechoing in the ears of men and setting forth in our acts, that saying of St. John: "Let us love one another" (*I John* iii. 23). Noble, indeed, and praiseworthy are the manifold philanthropic institutions of our day: but it is when they contribute to stimulate true love of God and of our neighbours in the hearts of men, that they are found to confer a lasting advantage; if they do not do so, they are of no real value, for "he that loveth not, abideth in death." (*I John* iii. 14).

9. The second cause of the general unrest we declare to be the absence of respect for the authority of those who exercise ruling powers. Ever since the source of human powers has been sought apart from God the Creator and Ruler of the Universe, in the free will of men, the bonds of duty, which should exist between superior and inferior, have been so weakened as almost to have ceased to exist. The unrestrained striving after independence, together with over-weening pride, has little by little found its way everywhere; it has not even spared the home, although the natural origin of the ruling power in the family is as clear as the noonday sun; nay, more deplorable still, it has not stopped at the steps of the sanctuary. Hence come contempt for laws, insubordination of the masses, wanton criticism of orders issued, hence innumerable ways of undermining authority; hence, too, the terrible crimes of men who, claiming to be bound by no laws, do not hesitate to attack the property or the lives of their fellow men.

10. In presence of such perversity of thought and of action, subversive of the very constitution of human society, it would not be right for Us, to whom is divinely committed the teaching of the truth, to keep silence: and We remind the peoples of the earth of that doctrine, which no human opinions can change: "There is no power but from God: and those that are, are ordained of God" (*Rom. xiii 1*). Whatever power then is exercised amongst men, whether that of the King or that of an inferior authority, it has its origin from God. Hence St. Paul lays down the obligation of obeying the commands of those in authority, not in any kind of way, but religiously, that is conscientiously - unless their commands are against the laws of God: "Wherefore be not subject of necessity, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake" (*Rom. xiii. 5*). In harmony with the words of St. Paul are the words of the Prince of the Apostles himself: "Be ye subject of every human creature for God's sake: whether it be the King as excelling, or to governors as sent by him" (*I Peter ii. 13-14*). From which principle the Apostle of the Gentiles infers that he who contumaciously resists the legitimate exercise of human authority, resists God and is preparing for himself eternal punishment: "Therefore he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist, purchase to themselves damnation" (*Rom. xiii. 2*).

11. Let the Princes and Rulers of peoples remember this truth, and let them consider whether it is a prudent and safe idea for governments or for states to separate themselves from the holy religion of Jesus Christ, from which their authority receives such strength and support. Let them consider again and again, whether it is a measure of political wisdom to seek to divorce the teaching of the Gospel and of the Church from the ruling of a country and from the public education of the young. Sad experience proves that human authority fails where religion is set aside. The fate of our first parent after the Fall is wont to come also upon nations. As in his case, no sooner had his will turned from God than his unchained passions rejected the sway of the will; so, too, when the rulers of nations despise divine authority, in their turn the people are wont to despise their human authority. There remains, of course, the expedient of using force to repress popular risings; but what is the result? Force can repress the body, but it cannot repress the souls of men.

12. When the twofold principle of cohesion of the whole body of society has been weakened, that is to say, the union of the members with one another by mutual charity and their union with their head by their dutiful recognition of authority, is it to be wondered at, Venerable Brethren, that human society should be seen to be divided as it were into two hostile armies bitterly and ceaselessly at strife? Drawn up against those who possess property, whether by inheritance or by industry, stand the proletariat and the workers, inflamed with hatred and envy, because, although they are by nature the same, they do not occupy the same position as the others. Once they have been imbued with the fallacies of the agitators, to whose behests they are most docile, who will ever make them see that it does not follow that because men are equal by their nature, they must all occupy an equal place in the community? And further, who will ever make them see that the position of each one is that which each by use of his natural gifts - unless prevented by force of circumstances - is able to make for himself? And so the poor who strive against the rich as though they had taken part of the goods of others, not merely act contrary to justice and charity, but also act irrationally, particularly as they themselves by honest industry can improve their fortunes if they choose. It is not necessary to enumerate the many consequences, not less disastrous for the individual than for the community, which follow from this class hatred. We all

see and deplore the frequency of strikes, which suddenly interrupt the course of city and of national life in their most necessary functions, we see hostile gatherings and tumultuous crowds, and it not unfrequently happens that weapons are used and human blood is spilled.

13. It is not our intention here to repeat the arguments which clearly expose the errors of Socialism and of similar doctrines. Our predecessor, Leo XIII, most wisely did so in truly memorable Encyclicals; and you, Venerable Brethren, will take the greatest care that those grave precepts are never forgotten, but that whenever circumstances call for it, they should be clearly expounded and inculcated in Catholic associations and congresses, in sermons and in the Catholic press. But more especially - and We do not hesitate to repeat it - by the help of every argument, supplied by the Gospels or by the nature of man himself, or by the consideration of the interests of the individual and of the community, let us strive to exhort all men, that in virtue of the divine law of charity they should love one another with brotherly love. Brotherly love is not calculated to get rid of the differences of conditions and therefore of classes - a result which is just as impossible as that in the living body all the members should have the same functions and dignity - but it will bring it to pass that those who occupy higher positions will in some way bring themselves down to those in a lower position, and treat them not only justly, for it is only right that they should, but kindly and in a friendly and patient spirit, and the poor on their side will rejoice in their prosperity and rely confidently on their help - even as the younger son of a family relies on the help and protection of his elder brother.

14. But there is still, Venerable Brethren, a deeper root of the evils we have hitherto been deploring, and unless the efforts of good men concentrate on its extirpation, that tranquil stability and peacefulness of human relations we so much desire, can never be attained. The apostle himself tells us what it is: "The desire of money is the root of all evils" (I. *Tim* vi. 10). If any one considers the evils under which human society is at present labouring, they will all be seen to spring from this root.

15. Once the plastic minds of children have been moulded by godless schools, and the ideas of the inexperienced masses have been formed by a bad daily or periodical press, and when by means of all the other influences which direct public opinion, there has been instilled into the minds of men that most pernicious error that man must not hope for a state of eternal happiness; but that it is here, here below, that he is to be happy in the enjoyment of wealth and honour and pleasure: what wonder that those men whose very nature was made for happiness should with all the energy which impels them to seek that very good, break down whatever delays or impedes their obtaining it. And as these goods are not equally divided amongst men, and as it is the duty of authority in the State to prevent the freedom enjoyed by the individual from going beyond its due limits and invading what belongs to another, it comes to pass that public authority is hated, and the envy of the unfortunate is inflamed against the more fortunate. Thus the struggle of one class of citizen against another bursts forth, the one trying by every means to obtain and to take what they want to have, the other endeavouring to hold and to increase what they possess.

16. Christ our Lord, foreseeing the present state of things, definitely stated in his sublime Sermon on the Mount, what are the real "beatitudes" of man in the world; and thereby He may be said to have laid down the foundations of Christian philosophy. Even in the eyes of the adversaries of

the faith they are full of incomparable wisdom, and form a most complete religious and moral system; and certainly all would admit that before Christ, Who is the Very Truth, no such teaching in those matters had ever been uttered with such weight and dignity, or with such a depth of love.

17. Now, the whole secret of this divine philosophy is, that what are called the goods of this mortal life have indeed the appearance of good, but not the reality; and, therefore, that it is not in the enjoyment of them that man can be happy. In the divine plan, so far are riches and glory and pleasure from bringing happiness to man that if he really wishes to be happy, he must rather for God's sake renounce them all: "Blessed are ye poor . . . Blessed are ye that weep now; . . . Blessed shall you be when men shall hate you and when they shall separate you, and shall reproach you and cast out your name as evil" (*Luke vi. 20-22*). That is to say, that it is through the sorrows and sufferings and miseries of this life, patiently borne with, as it is right that they should be, that we shall enter into possession of those true and imperishable goods which "God hath prepared for them that love Him" (*I. Cor. ii. 9*). This most important teaching of our Faith is overlooked by many, and by not a few it has been completely forgotten.

18. Hence it is necessary, Venerable Brethren, to revive it once more in the minds of all, for in no other way can individuals and nations attain to peace. Let us, then, bid those who are undergoing distress of whatever kind, not to cast their eyes down to the earth in which we are as pilgrims, but to raise them to Heaven to which we are going: "For we have not here a lasting city, but we seek one that is to come" (*Heb. xiii. 14*). In the midst of the adversities whereby God tests their perseverance in His service, let them often think of the reward that is prepared for them if victorious in the trial: "For that which is at present momentary and light of our tribulation worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory" (*II Cor. iv. 17*). We must strive by every possible means to revive amongst men faith in the supernatural truths, and at the same time the esteem, the desire and the hope of eternal goods. Your chief endeavours, Venerable Brethren, that of the Clergy, and of all good Catholics, in their various societies, should be to promote God's glory and the true welfare of mankind. In proportion to the growth of this faith amongst men will be the decrease of that feverish striving after the empty goods of the world, and little by little, as brotherly love increases, social unrest and strife will cease.

19. Let us now turn our thoughts from human society to the immediate affairs of the Church, for it is necessary that Our soul, stricken with the evils of the times, should seek consolation in one direction at least. Over and above those luminous proofs of the divine power and indefectibility enjoyed by the Church, We find a source of no small consolation in the remarkable fruits of the active foresight of our Predecessor, Pope Pius X, who shed upon the Apostolic Chair the lustre of a most holy life. For We see as a result of his efforts a revival of religious spirit in the clergy throughout the whole world; the piety of the Christian people revived; activity and discipline stimulated in Catholic associations; the foundation and increase of episcopal sees; provision made for the education of ecclesiastical students in harmony with the canonical requirements and in so far as necessary with the needs of the times; the saving of the teaching of sacred science from the dangers of rash innovations; musical art brought to minister worthily to the dignity of sacred functions; the Faith spread far and wide by new missions of heralds of the Gospel.

20. Well, indeed, has Our Predecessor merited of the Church, and grateful posterity will preserve the memory of his deeds. As, however, by God's permission, the field of "the good man of the house" is ever exposed to the evil practices of "the enemy," it will never come to pass that no work will be necessary to prevent the growth of "the cockle" from damaging the good harvest; and applying to ourselves God's words to the prophet: "Lo, I have set thee this day over the nations and over kingdoms, to root up and to pull down . . . to build and to plant" (*Jerem. i. 10*), it will be Our constant and strenuous endeavour, as far as it is in Our power, to prevent evil of every kind and to promote whatever is good, until it shall please the Prince of Pastors to demand an account of Our discharge of Our office.

21. As We are now for the first time addressing you all, Venerable Brethren, it seems a fitting moment to mention certain important points to which We propose to give particular attention, so that by the prompt union of your efforts with Our own, the desired good results may be more quickly attained.

22. The success of every society of men, for whatever purpose it is formed, is bound up with the harmony of the members in the interests of the common cause. Hence We must devote Our earnest endeavours to appease dissension and strife, of whatever character, amongst Catholics, and to prevent new dissensions arising, so that there may be unity of ideas and of action amongst all. The enemies of God and of the Church are perfectly well aware that any internal quarrel amongst Catholics is a real victory for them. Hence it is their usual practice when they see Catholics strongly united, to endeavour by cleverly sowing the seeds of discord, to break up that union. And would that the result had not frequently justified their hopes, to the great detriment of the interests of religion! Hence, therefore, whenever legitimate authority has once given a clear command, let no one transgress that command, because it does not happen to commend itself to him; but let each one subject his own opinion to the authority of him who is his superior, and obey him as a matter of conscience. Again, let no private individual, whether in books or in the press, or in public speeches, take upon himself the position of an authoritative teacher in the Church. All know to whom the teaching authority of the Church has been given by God: he, then, possesses a perfect right to speak as he wishes and when he thinks it opportune. The duty of others is to hearken to him reverently when he speaks and to carry out what he says.

23. As regards matters in which without harm to faith or discipline - in the absence of any authoritative intervention of the Apostolic See - there is room for divergent opinions, it is clearly the right of everyone to express and defend his own opinion. But in such discussions no expressions should be used which might constitute serious breaches of charity; let each one freely defend his own opinion, but let it be done with due moderation, so that no one should consider himself entitled to affix on those who merely do not agree with his ideas the stigma of disloyalty to faith or to discipline.

24. It is, moreover, Our will that Catholics should abstain from certain appellations which have recently been brought into use to distinguish one group of Catholics from another. They are to be avoided not only as "profane novelties of words," out of harmony with both truth and justice, but also because they give rise to great trouble and confusion among Catholics. Such is the nature of Catholicism that it does not admit of more or less, but must be held as a whole or as a whole

rejected: "This is the Catholic faith, which unless a man believe faithfully and firmly; he cannot be saved" (Athanas. Creed). There is no need of adding any qualifying terms to the profession of Catholicism: it is quite enough for each one to proclaim "Christian is my name and Catholic my surname," only let him endeavour to be in reality what he calls himself.

25. Besides, the Church demands from those who have devoted themselves to furthering her interests, something very different from the dwelling upon profitless questions; she demands that they should devote the whole of their energy to preserve the faith intact and unsullied by any breath of error, and follow most closely him whom Christ has appointed to be the guardian and interpreter of the truth. There are to be found today, and in no small numbers, men, of whom the Apostle says that: "having itching ears, they will not endure sound doctrine: but according to their own desires they will heap up to themselves teachers, and will indeed turn away their hearing from the truth, but will be turned unto fables" (II *Tim.* iv. 34). Infatuated and carried away by a lofty idea of the human intellect, by which God's good gift has certainly made incredible progress in the study of nature, confident in their own judgment, and contemptuous of the authority of the Church, they have reached such a degree of rashness as not to hesitate to measure by the standard of their own mind even the hidden things of God and all that God has revealed to men. Hence arose the monstrous errors of "Modernism," which Our Predecessor rightly declared to be "the synthesis of all heresies," and solemnly condemned. We hereby renew that condemnation in all its fulness, Venerable Brethren, and as the plague is not yet entirely stamped out, but lurks here and there in hidden places, We exhort all to be carefully here and there in hidden places, We exhort all to be carefully on their guard against any contagion of the evil, to which we may apply the words Job used in other circumstances: "It is a fire that devoureth even to destruction, and rooteth up all things that spring" (*Job* xxxi. 12). Nor do We merely desire that Catholics should shrink from the errors of Modernism, but also from the tendencies or what is called the spirit of Modernism. Those who are infected by that spirit develop a keen dislike for all that savours of antiquity and become eager searchers after novelties in everything: in the way in which they carry out religious functions, in the ruling of Catholic institutions, and even in private exercises of piety. Therefore it is Our will that the law of our forefathers should still be held sacred: "Let there be no innovation; keep to what has been handed down." In matters of faith that must be inviolably adhered to as the law; it may however also serve as a guide even in matters subject to change, but even in such cases the rule would hold: "Old things, but in a new way."

26. As men are generally stimulated, Venerable Brethren, openly to profess their Catholic faith, and to harmonize their lives with its teaching, by brotherly exhortation and by the good example of their fellow men, we greatly rejoice as more and more Catholic associations are formed. Not only do We hope that they will increase, but it is Our wish that under Our patronage and encouragement they may ever flourish; and they certainly will flourish, if steadfastly and faithfully they abide by the directions which this Apostolic See has given or will give. Let all the members of societies which further the interests of God and His Church ever remember the words of Divine Wisdom: "An obedient man shall speak of victory" (*Prov.* xxi. 8), for unless they obey God by showing deference to the Head of the Church, vainly will they look for divine assistance, vainly, too, will they labour.

27. Now, in order that all these recommendations should have the results We hope for, you know, Venerable Brethren, how necessary is the prudent and assiduous work of those whom Christ our Lord sends as "labourers into His harvest," that is to say the clergy. Remember, therefore, that your chief care must be to foster in the holiness which becomes them the clergy you already possess, and worthily to form your ecclesiastical students for so sacred an office by the very best available education and training. And although your carefulness in this respect calls for no stimulus, nevertheless We exhort and even implore you to give the matter your most careful attention. Nothing can be of greater importance for the good of the Church; but as Our Predecessors of happy memory, Leo XIII and Pius X, have definitely written on this subject, there is no need of further counsels from Us. We only beg of you that the writings of those wise pontiffs, and especially Pius X's "Exhortation to the Clergy," should, thanks to your insistent admonitions, not be forgotten, but ever attended to carefully.

28. There remains one matter which must not be passed over in silence, and that is, to remind the priests of the whole world, as Our most dear sons, how absolutely necessary it is, for their own salvation, and for the fruitfulness of their sacred ministry, that they should be most closely united with their Bishop and most loyal to him. The spirit of insubordination and independence, so characteristic of our times, has, as We deplored above, not entirely spared the ministers of the Sanctuary. It is not rare for pastors of the Church to find sorrow and contradiction where they had a right to look for comfort and help. Let those who have so unfortunately failed in their duty, recall to their minds again and again, that the authority of those whom "the Holy Spirit hath placed as Bishops to rule the Church of God" (*Acts* xx. 28) is a divine authority. Let them remember that if, as we have seen, those who resist any legitimate authority, resist God, much more impiously do they act who refuse to obey the Bishop, whom God has consecrated with a special character by the exercise of His power. "Since charity," wrote St. Ignatius Martyr, "doth not suffer me to be silent concerning you, therefore was I forward to exhort you, that you run in harmony with the mind of God: for Jesus Christ also, our inseparable life, is the mind of the Father, even as the bishops that are settled in the farthest parts of the earth are in the mind of Jesus Christ. So then it becometh you to run in harmony with the mind of the bishop" (*Ep. ad Ephes.* iii.). These words of the illustrious Martyr are re-echoed throughout the ages by the Fathers and Doctors of the Church.

29. Moreover, bishops have a very heavy burden in consequence of the difficulties of the times; and heavier still is their anxiety for the salvation of the flock committed to their care: "For they watch as being to render an account of your souls" (*Heb.* xiii. 17). Are not, then, they to be termed cruel who, by the refusal of the obedience which is due, increase that burden and its bitterness? "For this is not expedient for you" (*Heb.* xiii. 17), the Apostle would say to them, and that, because "the Church is a people united to its bishop, a flock which adheres to its pastor" (St. Cyprian: *Ep.* 66 [*al.* 69]), whence it follows that he is not with the Church who is not with the bishop.

30. And now, Venerable Brethren, at the end of this Letter, our mind turns spontaneously to the subject with which we began; and we implore with our most earnest prayers the end of this most disastrous war for the sake of human society and for the sake of the Church; for human society, so that when peace shall have been concluded, it may go forward in every form of true progress;

for the Church of Jesus Christ, that freed at length from all impediments it may go forth and bring comfort and salvation even to the most remote parts of the earth.

31. For a long time past the Church has not enjoyed that full freedom which it needs-never since the Sovereign Pontiff, its Head, was deprived of that protection which by divine Providence had in the course of ages been set up to defend that freedom. Once that safeguard was removed, there followed, as was inevitable, considerable trouble amongst Catholics: all, from far and near, who profess themselves sons of the Roman Pontiff, rightly demand a guarantee that the common Father of all should be, and should be seen to be, perfectly free from all human power in the administration of his apostolic office. And so while earnestly desiring that peace should soon be concluded amongst the nations, it is also Our desire that there should be an end to the abnormal position of the Head of the Church, a position in many ways very harmful to the very peace of nations. We hereby renew, and for the same reasons, the many protests Our Predecessors have made against such a state of things, moved thereto not by human interest, but by the sacredness of our office, in order to defend the rights and dignity of the Apostolic See.

32. It remains for Us, Venerable Brethren, since in God's hands are the wills of princes and of those who are able to put an end to the suffering and destruction of which We have spoken, to raise Our voice in supplication to God, and in the name of the whole human race, to cry out: "Grant, O Lord, peace, in our day." May He who said of himself: "I am the Lord . . . I make peace" (*Isaias* xli. 6-7) appeased by our prayers, quickly still the storm in which civil society and religious society are being tossed; and may the Blessed Virgin, who brought forth "the Prince of Peace," be propitious towards us; and may she take under her maternal care and protection Our own humble person, Our Pontificate, the Church and the souls of all men, redeemed by the divine blood of her Son.

33. We most lovingly grant to you, Venerable Brethren, to your clergy and to your people, the Apostolic Benediction, as a harbinger of heavenly gifts and as a pledge of our affection.

*Given at St. Peter's, Rome, on the Feast of All Saints the first day of November, one thousand nine hundred and fourteen the first year of our Pontificate.*

## **BENEDICT XV**

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