

Shrine of Our Lady of Knock, 8 setember 2013

Dear faithful sons and daughters of Mary in Christ,

It is a great honour for me to be here, in the Shrine of Our Lady of Knock, and the happy destination of my journey to Ireland.

Yesterday, the Holy Father, Pope Francis, invited the entire Church, all Christians, other faiths and every people of good will, to join him in prayer and fasting for "God's gift of peace".

Many in this Shrine, I am told, therefore, dedicated time and prayer yesterday evening to join millions of others around the world in the one common plea.

So today, as we honour the blessed memory of Our Lady's birthday, we can again add to our intentions the Holy Father's desires, certain that in this special Shrine of the Mother of Christ and Queen of Peace, our prayers will not go unheeded, even more so, on a celebration which so highly honours the Mother of our Lord.

It is a great privilege for me, to come from Rome and join you and your families in this pilgrimage, in prayer, sacrifice and celebration, to come to this consecrated place of worship, so highly sanctified by God and the faith of the wonderful people of Ireland.

I thank you all, in particular, I especially thank Your Excellencies for your warm welcome, the clergy present this afternoon, I thank too, our official hosts, that is, the Catholic Grandparents Association, which has become a source of great inspiration for hundreds of thousands of grandparents all over the world, and finally, I thank you all, most sincerely, for your warm welcome and love.

May Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace and Son of Mary, be praised evermore!

Msgr Carlos Simon

UnderSecretary of the Pontifical Council for the Family