



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF POPE JOHN PAUL II
TO SUPREME BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS***

Monday, 17 October 1983

Dear friends in Christ,

It is a pleasure for me to meet today with the Supreme Board of Directors of the Knights of Columbus. In the peace of our Lord, I greet you all.

I want you to know how grateful I am for all that you have done for the Holy See. Your loyalty to the Successor of Saint Peter has been a part of your rich heritage from the beginning. Thus, the special contributions to the Holy See which you have made in recent years are really a sign that this heritage continues to be strong. I thank you, too, for your various projects on behalf of the universal Church, and the way you have collaborated with bishops, clergy and other members of the laity in numerous endeavours aimed at building up individual local Churches and at aiding some of the most needy and defenceless members of society. I pray that your generosity and charity, your fraternity and faith will continue to grow and flourish for many years to come.

The Knights of Columbus have also striven to foster among the laity a better understanding of their irreplaceable role in the Church, something so greatly desired by the Second Vatican Council. In your own homes and personal professions, and through united efforts locally and beyond, you have made important contributions to the mission of the Church and inspired other lay people to similar pursuits. In this regard, I am thinking of the ways you have sought to offer encouragement and support to Christian families at a time in history when they face particularly great burdens and difficulties, and of how you have worked for the protection and dignity of human life at all stages, from conception to death. May God strengthen you as you continue to fulfil your lay vocation in the Church.

You have come to Rome during the Holy Year of the Redemption. I trust that, among your many activities here, you will find time to pass through the Holy Doors as pilgrims, to pray at the Tomb of the Apostle Peter and to seek the special graces of the Holy Year. I hope that you will return home with an even deeper faith in our Redeemer, filled with a fervent desire to open wide the doors of your hearts to the source of all truth and love, our Lord Jesus Christ. To the extent that Jesus lives in you, you will be able to further the Kingdom of Heaven. For as Saint Paul says, "it is God who, in his good will toward you, begets in you any measure of desire or achievement" (*Phil. 2, 13*).

I assure you of my prayers for you and your families and I send my greetings to all your fellow Knights throughout the world. May Christ who has redeemed us by his Cross and Resurrection be ever near you, to strengthen you in joy and in hope. May God grant you his abundant blessings.

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