



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER
POPE JOHN PAUL II
TO THE MEMBERS
OF THE "POPE JOHN PAUL II CULTURAL CENTER"**

Friday, 15 May 1998

I greet you all with joy on this, your first annual pilgrimage to Rome. I have been kept informed of the plans for the Center and I share your satisfaction that much progress has already been made.

On the occasion of the groundbreaking ceremony last September, I expressed my hope that the Cultural Center would be an enduring witness to the profound relationship between faith and culture. The new evangelization to which the Church is called on the eve of the Third Millennium calls for a sincere dialogue with the cultures which daily shape people's attitudes towards the mystery of our human destiny and of our relationship to God. The Church knows that the ability of the Gospel to shed light upon these fundamental questions can serve as a powerful force for the development, purification and enrichment of every culture (cf. *Centesimus Annus*, 50-51). She likewise knows that the way of life and the concerns emerging from a people's culture act as a providential stimulus to Christians in their efforts to understand more fully and to proclaim more effectively the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For this reason, I am confident that the Cultural Center will be instrumental in helping many people come to a greater understanding of the richness of the Catholic intellectual tradition and its relevance for the critical issues facing American society today.

I pray that your pilgrimage to Rome will be a time of spiritual renewal and that it will strengthen your love of Christ and his Church. To you and all the benefactors of the Center, as well as to your families, I cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing as a pledge of joy and peace in the Lord.

