



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER PAUL VI TO THE PONTIFICAL NORTH AMERICAN COLLEGE

Monday 2, July 1973

Beloved sons in Jesus Christ,

"This is the day the Lord has made; let us be glad and rejoice in it" (*Ps. 118, 24*).

Yes, dear sons, you are joyful on this day of your Ordination. And the entire Church shares your joy and the whole community of God's people is with you, sustaining you with prayerful support and affection and love.

For you and your families, for your classmates and friends, today is likewise a day of faith: faith in Jesus Christ and in his Church, faith in his ministerial priesthood, faith in the economy of salvation willed by the Father and accomplished through his Son and in the Holy Spirit, and perpetuated in the Church even to this our day - your day! And so to all of you we repeat this morning the solemn challenge found in the Epistle to the Hebrews: "Let us hold fast to our profession of faith" (*Hebr. 4, 14*).

You have studied about faith; since your baptism you have lived by it, having received an example from your parents, families and the Christian community. And yet today you are called upon to live by faith even more deeply and profoundly. It will make an essential difference to your lives and to your ministry. Exercised **without faith, a living faith animated by love for Christ and his brethren, your ministry would make little impact on anyone. But with faith and love and a constant effort and discipline to perfect these gifts of God, your ministry can make a great contribution to Christ's Church.** Although performed in only one section of the world, your ministry, in God's plan, can have beneficial effects on the whole Church. Why? Because we are all a communion of faith and love in Jesus Christ. Your exercise of the priesthood will indeed be effective for the entire Body of the Church to the extent that, having "set all your hope on the gift to be conferred on you when Jesus Christ appears" (*1 Petr. 1, 13*), you vigilantly await the coming of the Lord with true dedication to the welfare of those entrusted to your pastoral care.

Go forward then dear sons with confidence in the ministry to which you have been called, and on this day of joy-and always may the Lord grant salvation through you (Cfr. *Ps.* 117, 25). And all together let us "give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his kindness endures forever" (*Ps.* 117, 25). May Christ Jesus then strengthen you, today's new priests and those who are soon to be ordained. May he reward all those who have brought you to this day: especially your beloved parents. To all of you, in the name of the Lord and as a sign of our affection in him, we impart our Apostolic Blessing.