



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER PAUL VI TO THE MEMBERS OF THE NATO DEFENSE COLLEGE*

Saturday, 29 January 1977

With distinct pleasure we once again welcome the members of the NATO Defense College, together with their families. We are grateful for the courtesy of your visit and we note with satisfaction that the very composition of your group is a real expression of fraternal unity and international solidarity - elements that in themselves are fruitful conditions for peace.

We are happy indeed to have this opportunity to share with you some of our thoughts on this topic of peace, for we are sure that peace is of vital interest to each of you; and we trust that its true safeguarding will always be effective by the institutional aim of your College itself.

On different occasions we have repeatedly called attention to our peace motto of this year, and we do so once again today: "If you want peace, defend life". We are deeply convinced of the close relationship between peace and life. In our Message for the World Day of Peace, we stated that "it is not only war that kills Peace. Every crime against life is a blow to Peace, especially if it strikes at the moral conduct of the people . . .". And the basis of this thought is the conviction expressed in the same document that "Peace is . . . in the final analysis, the joyful celebration of life".

And today, as yesterday and tomorrow, we look to all men and women of good will to be allied in the defense of life, that is, in the attainment of peace.

With this appeal of ours we invoke the gift of peace upon yourselves, your loved ones and your countries. May God bless you all.

**Insegnamenti di Paolo VI*, vol. XV p.109-110;

L'Osservatore Romano, 30.1.1977, p.1.

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