



# The Holy See

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***ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER PAUL VI  
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SOVEREIGN MILITARY ORDER OF MALTA\****

*Thursday 6 July 1978*

This year, too, is renewed the now traditional custom of a special meeting with you, worthy Leaders and Members of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, on the occasion of the feast of your heavenly Patron, St John the Baptist.

The present circumstance and the glorious history of your Institution enable us to offer you a double word of reflection.

We wish, in the first place, to make to the Order of Malta a public acknowledgement of its tireless Christian effort in the charitable area, especially in hospital assistance. Be well assured that your efforts in this field are highly appreciated by us. They contribute considerably to keeping the typical figure of the Order alive and praiseworthy despite the inevitable changes of time. In the second place, and consequently, our word becomes a fatherly encouragement for you to continue tirelessly along the way on which you have already started. The practice of the Gospel is always far superior to changing civilizations and cultural fashions; only it, therefore, will be a guarantee for your future as it was already for your noble past. Always give a testimony of faith and of limpid and generous charity, so as to be constantly worthy both of the living example left to you by your predecessors, who brought renown to the history of the Order, and of the expectations that the Church and men place in you.

And may the Lord assist you and reward you, as only he can do with those who serve him sincerely. The special Apostolic Blessing, which we willingly impart to you and to all those whom you represent worthily here, is meant to be a token of this wish, as well as of our unchanged goodwill.

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\*ORa n.29 p.2.

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