



The Holy See

VISIT TO THE ROMAN MAJOR SEMINARY
ON THE OCCASION OF THE FEAST OF OUR LADY OF TRUST

***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING WITH THE SEMINARIANS***

*Roman Major Seminary
Friday, 1st February 2008*

I would like to thank your spokesman for his fine words and to thank you for this possibility of being with you. I truly feel at home here, where so many young men are preparing to be messengers of Christ, evangelizers in this world of ours.

At Vespers today I was particularly moved by the words of the Psalm in which Israel thanks God for the gift of his command that runs swiftly, and it says: he did not do this for all the others, it is only to us that he has given this grace to know his will, his ordinances.

The Israelites did not regard knowing God's Commandments as a burden or a yoke upon their shoulders but rather as a great gift: in the night of the world, they knew who God was and where to go, they knew which was the path of life.

Together with these words, it is even more important for us Christians to know that the Word of God is no longer solely a commandment but also a gift of love, incarnate in Christ. We can really say: thank you Lord for giving us this gift of knowing you; those who know you in Christ therefore know the living word and know in the obscurity, in the many enigmas of this world, in the many unsolvable problems, the way to go; we know where we come from, what life is and what we are called for.

And I think that this thanksgiving for the knowledge and gift, the knowledge of God Incarnate, must also awaken the idea: but I must communicate this to others, they too are seeking, they too want

to live well, they too long for the right path and do not find it. This is especially because it is a grace and also an obligation to know Jesus and to be given the grace to be called by him precisely in order to help others, so that they too may thank God joyfully, that they may have the grace to know who they are, where they come from, where they are going.

Our Lady of Grace, Our Lady of Trust, gave herself totally to the Lord, with great courage. The priesthood, as I said in my [Homily](#), is an adventure in today's world in which opposition and many denials of faith abound. It is an adventure and a very beautiful adventure, because this thirst for God really exists in the depths of the heart.

In the past few days, I received the *Greek Catholic Bishops of Ukraine on their ad limina* visit. Especially in the Eastern region, because of the Soviet regime, more than half the people declare themselves to be agnostic, to have no religion. I asked them: what are you doing, how do they behave, what do they want? And all the Bishops answered: they have a great thirst for God and desire to know him, they realize it is impossible to live this way.

Thus, despite all the contradictions, forms of resistance and opposition, thirst for God exists and it is our beautiful vocation to help, to give light. This is our adventure. There are, of course, so many unforeseeable things, so many complications, suffering and everything else. Yet, even Our Lady, at the moment of the Annunciation knew that an unknown path lay before her and, familiar with the prophecies of the Servant of God, well-acquainted with Sacred Scripture, she was able to foresee that this path would also be strewn with much suffering. Yet she believed in the Angel's words: do not be afraid because in the end God is stronger, do not even fear the Cross or all the suffering, because in the end God guides us and this suffering also helps us to attain the fullness of light.

Thus, may Our Lady of Trust also give you this great confidence, this courage, this joy of being servants of Christ, of the truth, of life.

Thanks to you all and may the Lord bless you all!