



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
TO THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE OF BOSSEY**

Monday, 12 February 1990 Dear Friends, I am happy to welcome the participants in the *Graduate School of the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey*, on the occasion of your pilgrimage to Rome. I greet you with the prayer of the Apostle Paul: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (2 *Cor.* 13, 13). Over the past four months you have been reflecting on the theme: "The Holy Spirit and the Prophetic Witness of the Church". The very name of the Holy Spirit draws our thoughts to the unsearchable mystery of the Triune God and to the reality of the Church, the visible communion of those who have received "God's love (which) has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us" (*Rom.* 5, 5). In the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, the Church professes her faith in the Holy Spirit as "the Lord, the Giver of Life ... who has spoken through the Prophets". Your studies will surely have inspired you to praise God for the immensity of his gift to the Church and to each of you in particular. From the beginning the Christian community experienced the power of the Holy Spirit, and that power led the Apostles and disciples to bear witness to Christ with courage and strength, even in the face of violent opposition. The Church's prophetic witness in every age is the proclamation of the saving event of Jesus Christ, and of his Paschal Mystery, the mystery of the Crucified and Risen Lord (Cfr. *Act.* 2, 14-36). In bearing witness to Christ, the Holy Spirit convinces the world of sin, namely, the "disobedience" that turns men and women away from God. Hence, the Church's witness is always a call to conversion and repentance, to peace and reconciliation. *The Holy Spirit*, the Love of the Father and the Son, is the divine *principle of that profound reconciliation and communion*. May we all, as Christ's disciples, heed the promptings of the Holy Spirit who leads us into all truth, and therefore into harmony and unity. I am pleased that your stay in Rome has offered you the opportunity of meeting with members of the Pontifical Council for promoting Christian Unity for discussions on themes of fundamental ecumenical interest. As well as coming to know the Catholic Church better, you will have perceived the unshakable nature of her commitment to the ecumenical task. In my prayers I ask the Holy Spirit to fill you with his gift for an ever increasing service of the unity and fellowship that are Christ's will for his followers. As you return to your own countries may the same Spirit strengthen you and make you evermore effective witnesses to the Father's love. God be with you! ©

Copyright 1990 - Libreria Editrice Vaticana