



The Holy See

MEETING WITH THE COMMUNITIES
OF THE ROMAN MAJOR SEMINARY AND THE CAPRANICA,
REDEMPTORIS MATER AND DIVINO AMORE SEMINARIES

ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II

Saturday, 21 February 2004

Dear Friends,

1. The Feast of Our Lady of Trust, the heavenly Patroness of the *Roman Major Seminary*, is by now an appointment to which we look forward with expectation. On this occasion I am delighted to meet you, the students of the *Roman Major Seminary*, as well as you, dear students of the *Capranica*, *Redemptoris Mater* and *Divino Amore* Seminaries.

I welcome you with great joy and greet you all with affection. I greet Cardinal Camillo Ruini, Vicar of Rome, the Auxiliary Bishops, the Rectors and the Superiors. I also greet the many young people who have joined you at this moving event, as they do every year. A special "thank you" to Mons. Marco Frisina and to the Choir and Orchestra of the Diocese of Rome for the fine performance they have given us of the Oratory inspired by the *Roman Triptych*.

2. It is a cause of renewed joy and comfort to me every time I meet the seminarians of Rome. Since I was Bishop of Krakow I have always wanted to keep up a privileged dialogue with seminarians, and it is easy to understand why: they are, in a very special way, the future and hope of the Church; their presence in the seminary testifies to the magnetic attraction that Christ exercises on young peoples' hearts. This magnetism in no way diminishes freedom; indeed, it enables them to fulfil themselves completely by choosing the greatest good: God, to whose exclusive service we dedicate ourselves forever. Forever! In these times, one has the impression that young people are somewhat reluctant when faced with responsibilities that are decisive and demanding. It seems they are afraid to make lifelong decisions. Thanks be to God, in the Diocese of Rome there are many young men who are prepared to consecrate their whole life to God and their brethren in the priestly ministry. However, let us constantly pray to the Lord of the harvest always to send new workers to his harvest and to sustain them in their commitment to adhere consistently to the demands of the Gospel.³ In this perspective, humility and trust have shown themselves to be particularly precious virtues. The Blessed

Virgin is a sublime example of them! Without the humble abandonment to God's will which made the most beautiful "yes" bloom in Mary's heart, who could assume the responsibility of the Priesthood? This also applies to you, dear young people who are preparing for Christian Marriage. Indeed, there are all too many reasons for the fear that you might feel within you and in the world. But if you keep your gaze fixed on Mary, you will hear her reply to the Angel echoing in your spirit: "Behold... let it be done to me according to your word" (Lk 1:38). Our theme this evening is eloquent in this regard: "*Blessed is she who believed*" (Lk 1:45). Luke the Evangelist presents the faith of the Virgin of Nazareth to us as an example to follow. And we must look constantly to her! I entrust you to her, dear seminarians and dear young people, so that neither you nor those responsible for your formation may ever be without her motherly support. With these sentiments, I cordially impart a special Apostolic Blessing to all of you and to your loved ones. ****Debitor factus sum*. Not for the first time. Beginning with Italy, many people have already written about this *Roman Triptych*: the distinguished professor, Giovanni Reale, an expert on Plato, and our own Cardinal Ratzinger; in my Poland, in Krakow, Czeslaw Milosz, the Nobel Prize winner, and E. Marek Skwarnicki, the poet who worked with me on the publication of this *Roman Triptych*. So truly, *debitor factus sum*. Today I have become indebted to my Roman Seminary. I thank the Cardinal Vicar of Rome, I thank the Monsignor Rector of the Roman Seminary, I thank (Mons.) Marco Frisina. He interpreted some poetical passages from the *Roman Triptych*. He set them to music. It is the first time I have ever heard a musical interpretation of it. Then the Roman Seminary chose its Feast day, Our Lady of Trust, for the event. I am very grateful to you all. I feel I am truly indebted to you, so again I say: *Debitor factus sum*. Much could be said, but perhaps it is better not to prolong this Address. I only want to tell you that this morning I celebrated Mass, the most Holy Sacrifice of the Eucharist, for the intentions of my Roman Seminary. Traditionally, on this occasion I would visit the seminary. Today you have come here, the seminarians, the teachers, the rector, all the Seminary authorities and all the guests. I would like to conclude by saying to everyone: thank you very much! What more can I say to you? Perhaps I could return to the first words of this Address: *Debitor factus sum*. I have run up a debt. And I have to pay. A just, or rather, the right price! I shall leave it in the hands of Cardinal Camillo Ruini, for the good of our beloved Roman Seminary. My best wishes, all my very best wishes! Praised be Jesus Christ.