



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF PAUL VI
TO A GROUP OF NEWLY ORDAINED PRIESTS
OF THE PONTIFICAL NORTH AMERICAN COLLEGE**

Saturday, 20 December 1969

Fresh from receiving a new effusion of the Holy Spirit, setting you apart for the unreserved service of the People of God, you have wished, beloved sons, to come with your parents to greet the Successor of Peter and to receive His blessing and encouragement. It is with much pleasure that We grant your request and receive you in these days of joyful preparation for the Feast of Christ's Birth.

It was precisely in His Incarnation that Christ's priesthood took its origin. In taking human nature, He became the unique mediator between the Father and mankind. Through your ministry He will visibly continue this mediation. When you administer the sacraments, preach the word and lead in prayer, it is He who, through you, is sanctifying and guiding His followers, and worshipping the Father on their behalf.

We who are the chosen instruments in this work of Christ must apply to ourselves the words of Saint Paul: «People must think of us as Christ's servants, stewards entrusted with the mysteries of God. What is expected of stewards is that each one should be found worthy of his trust» (*1 Cor.* 4, 1-2).

Each one of you has indeed received a great trust. We are sure that you are firmly resolved to be worthy of it in every way, withdrawing no part of the offering of self which you have freely made in placing yourselves completely at the disposal of Christ and His Church. May your faithfulness to that resolution enable you to say with Saint Paul at the end of your earthly lives: «I have kept the faith (*2 Tim.* 4, 7); I have been faithful to God, to Christ, to the Church, faithful to my vocation, to the ministry which has been entrusted to me».

To you and to your parents, whose part in preparing you for your high calling must undoubtedly have been of the greatest, We wholeheartedly impart Our Apostolic Blessing, as an encouragement in your resolve and as a pledge of divine aid in its performance.

We are happy to greet so large a group of workers in the food industry, some of whom come from distant lands to give Us the pleasure of their visit. May your activity and relationships be always guided by the spirit of dedication to the good of mankind and of full respect for the rights and dignity of the individual, so eloquently evoked in your leader's words. Knowing that work has an inherent dignity and close connection with the perfection of the person, since it is an indispensable means for the attainment of that mastery over the earth which God willed man to have, keep your eyes fixed on Him whose Nativity we are about to celebrate, who is our model in every way, and who chose to pass the greater part of His life as a humble workman in Galilee.

In His name We bless you, your families and your dear ones.