



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II

TO A GROUP OF PRIESTS AND SEMINARIANS FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK

Friday, 23 May 1986

Dear Friends, I am happy to meet this group of priests and seminarians from the Archdiocese of New York. I hope that your visit to Rome, especially to the tomb of Saint Peter, will be an occasion for a renewal of your faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The touchstone of that faith is your ability to repeat with ever greater conviction the words of Peter at Caesarea Philippi: "You are the Christ, the son of the living God". I wish also to invite you to live your vocation in fullness by constantly seeking to grow in your knowledge and love of the great mystery of the Church. Not any knowledge of the Church, the Bride of Christ, will do. Certainly not the mere knowledge based on partial and contingent sociological conceptions. But a profound spiritual and theological understanding of the mystery of salvation at work in the lives of the people through the Church's ministry, "having the eyes of your hearts enlightened – as Saint Paul writes to the Ephesians – that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power in us who believe". Not any love suffices. Certainly it is not enough to have merely superficial feeling of compassion and goodwill. What is needed is the love which is the fruit of the Spirit. God's own love which has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to Us. May your visit serve to sustain you in your dedication to God's people. May it remind you of the universal nature of the Church and bring you ever closer to the Apostolic See of Peter, the centre of unity and ecclesial communion. Be assured of my prayers to Mary, Mother of the Church, for all of you. May God bless you now and always. © Copyright 1986 - Libreria Editrice Vaticana