



# The Holy See

---

## *ADDRESS OF PAUL VI TO THE NATO DEFENSE COLLEGE\**

*Monday, 3 February 1969*

*Dear Sirs:*

Following the example of those who have participated in the preceding courses at your Defence College, you have decided not to leave Rome without coming to greet Us. We are always touched by this respectful gesture, which in Our eyes is an homage rendered not only to Our humble person, but especially to the moral and spiritual values of which the Catholic Church is the guardian and promoter.

We hope, kind Sirs, that these values which today are often ignored, will always be present in your spirits and your hearts. And We think that this is the best wish that we can express to you because it is the spiritual that is important in human activity. It is this that constitutes the dignity of man, that brings Us close to God, this mysterious Being, purely spiritual, who presides over the destiny of the world. It is also this that brings men close to one another; for everyone sees that, when it is a question of goods and material interests, too frequently men oppose one another. This even happens among members of a single family, or among groups in the same nation who seek different ends; and also within the human community, among nations which ought to have many reasons for living in brotherly understanding.

There is the grave and disturbing problem of peace in the world which is placed before the consciences of all, and in particular before your consciences, you who are more involved than others, one could say, having been given responsible duties to carry out in the responsible positions which you hold in your respective countries.

May you be determined partisans of the spiritual, of all that which can unite men and nations, and you will then be good builders of peace. This is the request that We permit Ourselves to leave with

you as a souvenir of this encounter, repeating to you Our gratitude for your cordial visit and invoking upon your persons, your families and your countries the most abundant divine favours.

---

\*ORa n.7 p.2.

---

Copyright © Dicastero per la Comunicazione - Libreria Editrice Vaticana