



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS
POPE JOHN PAUL II
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD
OF THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS**

Thursday, 11 December 1997

Your Excellency,

Dear Friends, I am pleased to greet Supreme Knight Virgil Dechant and members of the Executive Board of the Knights of Columbus. Your visit to Rome affords me a welcome opportunity to express my gratitude for the outstanding spiritual and material support which the Knights continue to give to the mission of the universal Church. I assure you of my personal thanks for your closeness to the Pope in his ministry of service to the Gospel and the upbuilding of all Christ's disciples in faith and love. Our meeting takes place during the celebration of the Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for America, in which the Pastors of the particular Churches of the American Continent are gathered to ponder the challenges of the new evangelization. In the Synod we have seen at work a spirit of ever greater solidarity between the Catholic peoples of North and South America. *An essential role in this great task of ecclesial renewal will belong to lay men and women*, and I am confident that the Knights, in fidelity to the high ideals of their Founder, will contribute to the transformation of society by their daily fidelity to the Gospel. Assuring all the Knights and their families of my prayers, I cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing as a pledge of joy and strength in Jesus Christ our Savior.

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