



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS
POPE JOHN PAUL II
TO THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE ANNUAL
SUMMER SCHOOL OF ASTROPHYSICS
SPONSORED BY THE VATICAN OBSERVATORY**

3 July 1997

*Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear young friends,*

It is always a pleasure for me to greet the participants in the *Annual Summer School of Astrophysics* sponsored by the Vatican Observatory, and this year is no exception. I cordially welcome you here, a welcome which I extend also to the group of friends and benefactors of the Vatican Observatory who have joined you in these final days of your study session.

"Rejoice, young man, in your youth... Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth" (Ec 11:9; 12:1). These words of Sacred Scripture come to mind as I see this group of young scholars from many different nations. Certainly you have good reason to rejoice in the gifts which God has granted you, as you look with confidence to the future. It is my hope that your research into the vast expanses of the universe and the mysteries of time and space will awaken in you an awe for the infinite wisdom of the Creator and an ever greater respect for the dignity of each human being created in his image. For the future of the human family lies not merely in the development of knowledge and technology, but in the efforts of men and women of wisdom, vision and passionate concern for the building of a world of justice, peace and authentic solidarity.

Dear friends, as I offer you my prayerful good wishes for your studies, I cordially invoke upon you and your families the richest blessings of Almighty God.

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