



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE RECTOR, SUPERIORS AND STUDENTS
OF THE ALMO COLLEGIO CAPRANICA**

Saturday, 17 January 2004

*Your Eminence,
Venerable Brothers in the Episcopate,
Dear Students and Alumni of the Almo Collegio Capranica,*

The imminence of the annual Memorial of St Agnes offers me the pleasant opportunity to meet the community of your College that venerates the young Roman martyr as patroness. I offer each one of you a very cordial greeting. I first greet Cardinal Camillo Ruini, President of the Episcopal Commission that oversees the College, and I thank him for his words on behalf of you all. I greet the Prelates present, the Rector, Mons. Alfredo Abbondi and his collaborators, the students and former students, and all those who belong to the Capranica family. I thank you all for this pleasant visit.

Dear friends, a typical feature of your College is its outstanding attention to "family life", as you Capranicans like to call it among yourselves, founded on firm human, theological and spiritual references. I know how you insist on this spirit of fraternal communion which prepares you for the pastoral ministry that will be entrusted to you in the future. This spirit, as you know well, must be nurtured with intense and constant prayer, since God is the source of our unity. It also requires that you share the same goals and ideals, striving for the union of minds and hearts.

You must never lack the cement of unity, that is, charity, the true "*vis unitiva*", together with the exercise of the virtues, especially obedience and humility, searching constantly for Gospel perfection. The Lord who has chosen you as his ministers wants you to be holy, that is, consecrated totally to him and to his Church. May this be your main concern, to which it is only right to combine the daily commitment to a solid human and doctrinal formation.

May the heavenly Mother of the Church watch over and protect your College, and may the holy martyr St Agnes also intercede for you. I assure you of my constant remembrance to the Lord, and I wholeheartedly bless you all.

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