



The Holy See

*ADDRESS OF PAUL VI TO THE MEMBERS OF THE NATO DEFENSE COLLEGE**

Saturday, 6 May 1967

It has become a tradition of your College, Gentlemen, to pay Us a visit during your work sessions. Today We are happy to receive the Auditors and Members of the Faculty of the thirtieth session with their families. We wish you all a cordial welcome.

The site of your College has now been fixed in Rome. Thus you have already had occasion, in the time left free by your studies, to know and to appreciate this incomparable City, and to assimilate, to a certain extent, its vast patrimony of history and culture. You have read the inscriptions on its stones which testify to what has been called «the greatness and the decadence of the Romans». But, besides the men and the institutions of ancient Rome which are now only a memory, you have certainly discovered, by means of the catacombs, the tombs of the martyrs, the basilicas, and in the religious ceremonies and unending pilgrimages, the living stream of Christianity, which has left its indelible mark on this City.

Your presence here today is, to Us, a proof that you are well aware of these spiritual values which form the base of true civilization. We trust that you will find, in your contact with the religious treasures of Christian Rome, elevation and enrichment for your souls.

The lectures and studies in which you participate are, it is true, dedicated to matters of a different order. Nevertheless, there is no branch of human activity which can remain deprived of the fundamental measure of man, his moral and spiritual dimension.

We have noticed, for example, that among the problems you consider are included those which deal with international organizations of cooperation and assistance to developing countries. On such a question as this, a spiritual institution such as the Church has something to say; and in fact she has spoken recently in a solemn document of which you have doubtless heard: the Encyclical

Letter *Populorum progressio*. This Letter speaks of the happiness of men, of justice between nations, of peace in the world. One can never hope to achieve these objectives in a lasting manner, if one neglects the great principles of the moral order, which must inspire man's activity on this earth.

It is Our hope, Gentlemen, that you may happily continue your sojourn in Rome, and pleasantly conclude it with your study voyage throughout Europe. We thank you for your kind visit, and upon you and your families We gladly invoke an abundance of divine blessings.

**Insegnamenti di Paolo VI, vol.V, p.761-762.*

L'Osservatore Romano, 7.5.1967, p.2.