



# The Holy See

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## *ADDRESS OF POPE JOHN PAUL II TO A GROUP OF AMERICAN PRIESTS*

*Thursday, 2 December 1982*

*Dear brothers in Christ,*

I am very pleased to welcome the priests who are taking part in the Institute for Continuing Theological Education at the North American College. It gives me joy to be with you, for by your presence I am reminded of the common mission which is ours as servants of the Gospel, the mission of proclaiming to the world that Jesus Christ is Lord.

During your time in Rome, you have the opportunity of increasing your knowledge of theology and sacred scripture, of strengthening your spiritual life and of deepening your love for the Church. It is as if you had heard the invitation of the Master to come apart and rest awhile. During the past few months, you have left behind the active ministry and, in the company of brother priests, have had the opportunity to contemplate the mysteries of God and to be renewed in mind and heart.

As you prepare to return to your respective dioceses and communities, I want to remind you of the encouraging words of Saint Paul, "God has called you, and he will not fail you" (*1 Thess. 5, 24*). My brothers, in whatever you do and in whatever you are called to suffer, always have a deep confidence in the love of God at work in your heart and in the hearts of others as you reach out to them in faithful service. The power of the Cross and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ is active in the Church today just as it has been in every age. And it is active in each of you when you give a shepherd's care to the flock entrusted to you.

My God bless you, and may he bless all those you love and serve as a priest.

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