



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY
OF TRIAL LAWYERS**

*Castel Gandolfo
Friday, 22 September 1989*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to have this opportunity to meet with you, the distinguished members of the *International Academy of Trial Lawyers*, and to welcome you and your spouses to Castelgandolfo. As trial lawyers, you are committed to the resolution of conflicts and the pursuit of justice through legal and rational means. This work is indispensable for the construction of a truly humane and harmonious social order, as the centuries-old juridical experience of the West bears eloquent witness.

The Church has always recognized in the law an essential aspect of human social and political life. Her concern for a legal order imbued with the spirit and values of the Gospel led not only to the formation of an immense and technically refined body of ecclesiastical law, the *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, but also to the elaboration of legal and canonical theories which combined profound human wisdom with a vision of man and society drawn from Christian faith. At the heart of this process was a profound conviction, born of faith, that *an ordered and just society is a requirement of human nature itself*, and consists in the pursuit of the common good through the cooperation of each of its members, under legitimate authority.

Today, as in the past, this conviction must be defended against those forces within our world which would deny and undermine the authentic human values upon which the rule of law and the pursuit of the common good are founded. More than ever, men and women are called upon to commit themselves to the belief that *the law is an irreplaceable and morally worthy instrument for attaining a human society marked by justice and lasting peace*. World events constantly remind us

that the desire to build a society based on mutual respect, freedom and equity under the law is one which is inscribed within the human heart itself, and is fundamental to the progress of civilization.

As men and women engaged in the practice of law may your service of others always be inspired by *a deep faith in man and in the goal of a just and genuinely human society*. Conscious of the importance of your work, I invoke upon each of you the blessings of Almighty God, the author of peace and the source of all justice.

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