



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
TO THE STUDENTS AND FACULTY
OF THE "MASSACHUSETTS MARITIME ACADEMY"**

Monday, 3 February 1992

Dear Friends,

I extend a warm welcome to the students and faculty of the *Massachusetts Maritime Academy*. In your journey to the Eternal City, you have followed in the steps both of Saint Peter, who was buried on this Vatican Hill, and of Saint Paul, who landed near the Bay of Naples and then made his way to Rome (cf. Acts 28:13-14). May your visit to the cultural and artistic treasures of Rome prove spiritually enriching and deepen your appreciation of the religious faith to which many of them bear eloquent witness.

Your training cruise has brought you across the Atlantic Ocean, which Christopher Columbus crossed five hundred years ago on a heroic voyage of exploration which led to the discovery of America. The commemoration of this great event offers you an opportunity to reflect on the new challenges which your generation will face in a rapidly changing world. In the end, the effectiveness with which you meet those challenges will depend not only on the knowledge and technical skills you have mastered but also on your personal maturity and discipline, your moral integrity and your commitment to working generously with others in pursuit of the common good.

The experience of working together as a team in manning a ship has no doubt convinced you of the importance of these values. Your cruise to Europe has also introduced you to some of the many peoples and cultures which make up our world. These experiences will serve you in good stead as you prepare to assume your responsibilities after graduation. One of the promising signs of our times is a growing appreciation of the unity of the human family and the need for solidarity among all its members. Whatever your eventual plans, I encourage you to be sensitive always to the needs of others, to place their good above your personal interests and to show genuine concern for those less fortunate than yourselves.

I offer all of you my prayerful good wishes as you continue your studies and as the Academy begins its second century of service. Upon you and your families I cordially invoke God's abundant blessings of grace and peace.

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