



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE COMMUNITY
OF THE PONTIFICAL BEDA IN ROME***

Monday, 9 December 2002

Dear Friends in Christ,

I am happy to greet you and to offer my warm good wishes on the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the Pontifical Beda College. I join you in giving praise to God for the many graces that have come to the Church through the work of the College in the years since its foundation.

It was a time of great turbulence when Blessed Pope Pius IX established what became the Collegio Pio. Society was in turmoil, and the Church was not spared the troubles of the age. In England, a number of Anglicans had decided to seek Ordination in the Catholic Church; and this prompted the Pope to establish the College. At the end of the nineteenth century, again in unsettled times, the College had a surge of new life and in eighteen-ninety-seven became the Pontifical Beda College, in honour of the great English saint and scholar whom Pope Leo XIII was about to proclaim a Doctor of the Church at that time.

Another important step forward came in nineteen-sixty, when the College moved to its present site in the shadow of Saint Paul's Basilica. In the meantime, the College has opened its doors to students from many countries. That is a great service offered to the whole Church by the Bishops of England and Wales, and I wish to thank them for their generosity.

I fervently entrust the College and its community to the protection of Mary, Mother of the Church, and to the intercession of your patron, the Venerable Bede. God bless you all.
