



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE 12th SEMINAR
ON "SCIENCE, RELIGION, HISTORY"**

Castel Gandolfo, 8 August 2003

*Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear Friends,*

I would like to express my warm gratitude for this common reflection, which has brought us together in these days in the search for truth. I thank God that we were able to meet here for the 12th time to consider the problems concerning the major questions that determine the specificity of human culture. I stressed the role of these problems in the Encyclical *Fides et Ratio*. In contemporary culture, fundamental questions regarding meaning and the truth, beauty, suffering, the infinite and contingency cannot be omitted. I thank you because we have been able to deal with them from a prospective in which science's new findings, together with reflection on classic philosophy, reciprocally complement each other.

Our community has expressed symbolically the bond between the Church and the Academy; this bond is particularly important in this era of major cultural changes. In order that the contemporary witnesses of truth should not feel alone, it is necessary to promote an authentic spirit of solidarity between all those who are at the service of thought. The Church cannot be indifferent to the achievements of science that have come about and developed within Christianity's cultural sphere of influence. It is also necessary to remember that truth and freedom are inseparably united in the great work of the edification of culture at the service of the complete maturation of the human person. Calling to mind the words of Christ, "the truth will make you free" (Jn 8: 32), we want to build the gospel culture, free from those illusions and utopias which brought great suffering in the 20th century.

My thought goes to all those people who have participated in the past in our seminars. Many of

them have gone to the Lord and, in His light, they certainly see more clearly the truths that we must discover in the semidarkness of research and discussions. I commend them all to God, together with all of you gathered here. May the sense of Christian responsibility for the future of culture unite us; this sense allows us to create a great harmony of life which indicates Christ as the source of every good. To him I entrust all of you, your loved ones and your future plans.

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