



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER PAUL VI
TO THE MEMBERS OF THE
YOUNG PRESIDENTS' ORGANIZATION***

Friday, 8 May 1970

Dear Friends,

We welcomed with great pleasure your request to have this audience today; We are happy to have this occasion to address most cordially the members of the Young Presidents' Organization, and their wives.

The occasion of your gathering is an important one: it is your First International Congress outside the United States, or as you also like to call it: "First International University for Presidents". We are happy that this reason has brought you to Rome; We are happy to welcome you to the Vatican.

We wish at this time to tell you how deeply interested We are in your persons: who you are and what you do. We are further interested in the important theme you have chosen for your Congress. Both of these aspects attract our attention and seem to invite our comments.

First of all, our interest is in your persons: in you who make up the Young Presidents' Organization. Because you are presidents, you exert great influence. You are leaders in the world and leaders you must be. You are young and the influence of your dynamism must be felt for the good of others.

We cannot help but admire deeply the goals that you have set up for yourselves. You are dedicated to improving your professional capacity, and to perfecting yourselves in view of your public responsibility. You seek to enlarge your vision of general problems affecting the economic and social life of our times.

These are indeed high and worthy aspirations. Through them you testify to your dedication to serve humanity and thus you elicit Our esteem.

In the context of this your sense of commitment to the common good, We see why you have also chosen such a noble theme: "One Planet, One People, One Purpose". The world is indeed small and, despite setbacks, the movement toward fraternal unity is on. Our common purpose can be none other than to promote unity and the peace that both causes unity and results from it. We therefore look upon you, dear friends, as artisans of unity and peace. We think that you are especially placed in order to build bridges of unity, and span divisions that impair peace.

A long tradition gives us the name of Pontiff; our special work is to bridge over divisions and to promote unity "in the bond of peace" (*Eph. 4, 3*). You can see another reason why We are so interested in the work you do.

But the thought that We would leave with you today-and We have repeated it so very often - is this: the "new name for peace is development" (*Populorum progressio*, 87). Under this heading, We would like to see your special contribution. You can be great artisans of peace because you have the ability to promote development - vast and unselfish - that will aid the people of the world effectively to reach its goal. Peace will prevail only if human dignity is recognized and if work is always at the service of man.

The development We speak about is "the good of every man and of the whole man" (*Ibid.*, 14). This involves the efforts of all men of good will (*Ibid.*, 83).

As you pursue your goals, we trust that you will continue to turn your minds toward God from whom alone can come the perfect orientation of your thoughts and actions, in accord with their highest Principle. It is from God that you will obtain the light and strength and protection needed in your lives: "Every good endowment and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights . . ." (*Jac. 1. 17*).

We hope that the deliberations on your relevant theme may spur you on to do the maximum in the service of mankind. Your responsibility-as you so well know-is heavy and the needs are many. Your contribution may well be more lasting than bronze.

With this as our hope and prayer, and thanking you for your gracious visit, we invoke upon all of you abundant blessings from God.
