



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF PAUL VI
TO A GROUP OF DIOCESAN PRIESTS
FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO**

Friday, 16 June 1972

We cordially welcome the priests who have undertaken a visit to Rome as part of the celebration of their Silver Jubilee of Ordination. We assure you and all who have come with you that we too share your joy as you commemorate twenty-five years in the priestly ministry. An anniversary such as this is always a source of happiness, because it recalls the service you have given to the People of God. The fundamental achievement of your twenty-five years is that you have made it possible for Jesus Christ to live through faith and love in many hearts and in many communities.

In this regard we can recall the words of the recent Synod of Bishops giving assurance that “the priestly ministry . . . alone perpetuates the essential work of the Apostles: by effectively proclaiming the Gospel, by gathering together and leading the community, by remitting sins, and especially by celebrating the Eucharist, it makes Christ, the head of the community, present in the exercise of his work of redeeming mankind and glorifying God perfectly” (*De sacerdotio ministeriali*, 4). This has been your privileged task for twenty-five years. Who can put into words what the loving presence of Christ has meant for the many men and women whom you have served? Who can calculate the spiritual treasures of wisdom and love, of goodness and peace with which the lives of so many have been enriched through your ministry?

We rejoice with you today, and our joy leads us to assure you of our prayers. We pray especially that you will always maintain a close bond of unity in the fellowship of the priesthood. We recall again the words of the Synod: “Let priests follow Christ’s example and cultivate with the bishop and with each other that brotherhood which is founded on their ordination and the oneness of their mission so that their priestly witness may be more credible” (*De sacerdotio ministeriali*, 6).

May the Lord sustain you in this unity and grant you joy always in your service of him and of his

People.

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