



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS PIUS XII
TO THE COMMANDERS OF
THE UNITED STATES NAVAL FORCES IN EUROPE***

Saturday, 20 April 1946

It has always been the tradition of the United States Navy that its officers, whether in time of peace or in moments of extreme danger, should exemplify in an eminent degree those qualities of leadership without which no one can hold the respect of those under his command. To this end your technical training is directed and, what is still more important, to this end likewise are inculcated those principles of conduct which result in true nobility of character.

Leaders must in their turn be led; for they, too, are but men. They, too, need the inspiration of example.

In God's economy there has been given to them, as to every man, no matter what his position, as model and guide One, the imitation of Whom makes for true greatness. Tomorrow, Easter day, the Christian world commemorates the glory of His resurrection. None other could be as perfect as He, none other so worthy of imitation; for He is both human and divine, God and man, the noblest character that can exist.

Gentlemen, as you strive to perfect yourselves in your profession, pattern your characters on Christ. A courageous, steady carrying out of the principles taught by Him will reflect to your own honour and to the honour of your country, will react to the good of the men you command and will be a forceful though peaceful contribution to the betterment of mankind.

As a token of Our pleasure in welcoming you today We pray that you and your dear ones may share abundantly in the precious blessings of Easter.

Quinto anno di Pontificato, 2 marzo 1946 - 1° marzo 1947, p. 61
Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana

Copyright © Dicastero per la Comunicazione - Libreria Editrice Vaticana