



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
TO THE NEWLY ORDAINED DEACONS
OF THE PONTIFICAL NORTH AMERICAN COLLEGE**

Friday, 12 April 1991

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to have the opportunity of greeting *the newly ordained Deacons of the Pontifical North American College*, together with your families and the Rector and the faculty members responsible for your formation.

At your Ordination yesterday each new Deacon received a precious spiritual gift, namely, the imposition of hands "unto a ministry of service" (Cfr. *Lumen Gentium*, 29). Like all God's gifts, this sacramental grace will help you to attain a more fruitful union with the Lord and to live fully the particular vocation which you have received in the communion of the Church. You have been chosen to preach the Gospel and to lead others to the "obedience of faith" in Christ Jesus (Cfr. *Rom.* 16, 26). How essential it is, then, that you constantly deepen your own faith in Christ and your oneness of mind and heart with his Church! Since "the witness of a Christian life is the first and irreplaceable form of mission" (Ioannis Pauli PP. II *Redemptoris Missio*, 42), the effectiveness of your ministry will greatly depend upon how clearly your lives reveal the freedom and joy which you have found in Christ. Never doubt that in responding to the Lord's call with an undivided heart you will become a challenging sign to others of the power of his grace and the saving truth of his word.

Most probably it was through your parents and the members of your families— many of whom are present here— that you first came to know the divine gifts of faith and love. May the Lord reward the Christian witness and generous support of all those who have accompanied you on the journey you are making towards the priesthood. In the end, your fidelity and zeal in fulfilling the charge you have received will be the best and most lasting way for you to express your thanks to

them.

I assure you of my prayers as you take up the "ministry of Liturgy, word and charity" (*Lumen Gentium*, 29), and I ask the Risen Lord to strengthen you always in joyful service of his People. May Mary, Mother of the Church and Patroness of your College, accompany you and guide you in that new life which Jesus her Son has won for us by his glorious Resurrection from the dead. As a pledge of Easter joy, I cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing to you all.

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