



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II TO THE COMMUNITY OF THE MAJOR SEMINARY OF VIENNA

Tuesday, 3 February 2004

*Your Eminence,
Distinguished Father Rector,
Dear Seminarians,*

I am delighted to welcome you all to the Apostolic Palace! In the context of your seminary formation, you have come on pilgrimage to the tombs of the Apostles and the See of the Successor of Peter. May this visit strengthen your union with the universal Church!

"*Come and see*" (Jn 1: 39). With these words, Christ invited the first disciples to follow him and to stay with him. The seminary "is called to be, in its own way, a continuation in the Church of the apostolic community gathered about Jesus" (Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, n. 60).

Dear Seminarians, your friendship with Christ, Lord of your precious vocation, and your readiness to follow him in the hierarchical community of the Church must grow deeper and deeper. Seminary life is intended to help and guide you precisely in this. Every day, over and over, you must give a fundamental answer to Christ's crucial question: "*Do you love me?*".

Study and prayer, the regular reception of the sacrament of Penance and devout participation in the Eucharistic sacrifice are indispensable means on the path to holiness.

May the Lord, therefore, give you from this moment - and later, when you are priests - the grace to respond to his holy call with the total gift of your life. For this I cordially impart to you, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, my Apostolic Blessing.

Copyright © Dicastero per la Comunicazione - Libreria Editrice Vaticana