



# The Holy See

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## **MESSAGE OF POPE PAUL VI TO GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY**

*Thursday, 26 September 1963*

*Very Reverend Father Rector, Beloved Members of the Faculty,  
Alumni and Students of Georgetown University.*

Each year, the feast of the North American Martyrs gives reason for profound spiritual joy. The lives of those holy Jesuits, offered to God and crowned with martyrdom, were not spent in vain. For, wherever in your great continent they planted the infant Church, there is today, for all to see, the resultant golden harvest; and We thank God for it.

This year, beloved Sons, this feast brings another cause for joy, since it marks the beginning of the celebrations to commemorate the one hundred and seventy-fifth Anniversary of the founding of Georgetown University in Washington, D. C.

We felicitate you on this memorable occasion. The history of your University, the Alma Mater of Catholic Colleges in the United States of America, is a source of true satisfaction to Us.

The Constitution of the United States was adopted in 1789. Your University was founded the same year. So it is that the Church, ever interested in inculcating in the youth of a nation the religious and civil principles upon which society and national life are based, has been present in the noble work of education right from the beginnings of your republic.

Georgetown University has given to your beloved country graduates who have been trained in the traditions of Christian education, and who present themselves to society ready to assume the responsibilities entrusted to them. Indeed, your students have gone out and are even now throughout the United States occupying positions of trust, and discharging their duties of direction with commendable success. Leadership is a quality not unknown to them, and the solidity and

fullness of the teaching they have had, equips them for the weighty service they are asked to render. That very same teaching, however, gauged, not just to a formal preparation for future work in the many fields of endeavour in which your graduates labor, but also to instilling in them the moral principles which contribute to sound personal virtue and holy family life. And, in truth, this is its greatest contribution, because the firm moral fibre of individuals and families in a society naturally leads to a virtuous moral condition of that society as a whole. Your alumni have given honor to God and have been a source of pride to your nation.

We express the fond desire that the future years will see ever greater results from Georgetown University and from the labors of the devoted faculty who serve it.

Lifting Our heart in gratitude to Almighty God for the manifold spiritual fruits and blessings already obtained, We cordially impart to you, Very Reverend Father Rector, to the faculty, alumni, students, to all your many benefactors and friends, and to all Our children in the United States of America, as a pledge of copious heavenly graces and favors, Our special paternal Apostolic Benediction.