



# The Holy See

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## **ADDRESS OF PAUL VI TO THE INDIAN STUDENTS IN ROME**

*Monday, 21 December 1964*

*Dear Indian Students in Rome,*

We are particularly happy, after Our return from a very brief but memorable visit to your motherland, to welcome you into Our home and to share with you Our joy.

First of all, We wish to thank you for your prayers which accompanied Us on Our journey, and which contributed so much to the success of the Eucharistic Congress. We know that you offered special prayers for this historic event.

In your beautiful country We were able to witness first-hand its beauties and to meet personally with your good people. Our schedule, though limited to a few days, was a very crowded one, and this was as We wanted because it provided the opportunity of seeing as many as We could. We saw the fervor of your people, and We admired the respect for religion which was everywhere in evidence. Their hospitality and warm welcome moved Us deeply, and We wanted so much to return the warmth of the affection and regard. Therefore We take this occasion to express once again publicly Our sincere thanks to His Excellency, the President of the Republic of India, to the Central Government of your country, to the civil authorities of the State and City Governments, and to His Eminence, Our Beloved Son, Cardinal Gracias, and his faithful, for the warm reception accorded to Us. Do you wonder then that We have a special affection for your motherland and her citizens?

You are here in Rome preparing yourselves for future service in India, and We recommend that you apply yourselves without stint to your task. Your country and your Church need you. The contribution that will be yours will be a most precious one, and for this dedication and devotion will be needed. India is a country in progress, and it is seeking to make giant steps in its development.

Do not permit that any advance cause the loss of your valuable heritage of spiritual values or that it be put to one side. India is a religious nation, and her role for world peace and understanding is an important one. In fulfilling her responsibilities, she will succeed more effectively if she demonstrates to the whole world her deep religious life.

We shall pray for you and for your studies. We shall call down abundant blessings for your country, and We shall watch with loving care the advances in your motherland. In pledge of this, We will now impart to you, to your dear ones at home, and to Our beloved India, Our special Benediction.