



The Holy See

***RADIO MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS PIUS XII
TO CATHOLICS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
ON THE 50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY
OF AMERICA IN WASHINGTON****

Monday, 13 November 1939

It is from a heart full of paternal affection, beloved sons of the United States of America, that We address this message to you, telling of Our desire to have part in the Golden Jubilee celebrations of your magnificent Catholic University.

Our pleasure is all the deeper and more intimate for the fact that We have had the good fortune to see with Our own eyes — although for only a short time — the great work you have accomplished for the glory of God and the welfare of your country.

Founded in in 889 by the Bishops of the United States, during the Pontificate of that great patron of studies, Pope Leo XIII, your young University, full of vigor and promise, took its place in that long line of the most distinguished and venerable Universities of the past. And, following their example; in its adherence to the purest traditions of Christian thought, it attained such remarkable success that it was justly praised by Our immediate Predecessor of happy memory, as a fertile sowing ground of Catholic culture in the United States.

We are genuinely happy to make that praise Our own, trusting that in these turbulent days it may encourage and strengthen you to pursue the noble but arduous mission which the University fulfils.

The Christian education of youth was never of more decisive or vital importance than it is today, when We are faced with the bewildering errors of a naturalism and a Materialism which are plunging the world into war — evidence in themselves of the hollowness of a philosophy built on purely human standards.

As We see these calamities multiply and intensify, We might well lose heart, were We not sustained by trust in the loving Providence of God which gives strength and solace more abundantly as worldly confidence fails.

But our chief hope, after God, rests in the schools of Christian culture, old and new, among which stands your Catholic University as a typical example, assigning in its zeal for truth the correct place in its programs to natural science and metaphysics, mind and heart, past and present, reason and revelation.

Thus, in the austere retirement of your halls, alternating reflection and study with prayer you will continue to train the young men of tomorrow to face false teaching and evil consequences as intrepid champions of those fundamentals of civilization which, enshrined in the Gospel of Christ and taught unerringly by the Church, are truly spirit and life.

Inspired by this fair promise, the Catholics of the United States, and indeed every right-minded man, cannot fail to appreciate the extraordinary importance which today invests their already famous University, just as they cannot fail to be conscious of the fact that its future prosperity is entrusted to their enthusiasm, their prayers, their cooperation. Like the other renowned Catholic Universities of the United States of America, it is at once their pride in the present, and their protection for the future.

And We for Our part — while expressing the warmest wishes of Our paternal heart for its progress — call down upon it the abundance of God's blessing; with deep affection We bless the Episcopate of the United States, to whose enlightened zeal the University is a monument; We bless the professors, the students, and all the faithful, but especially those who in any way help this noble Institution to endure and flourish.

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