



The Holy See

***DISCORSO DI SUA SANTITÀ PIO PP. XII
AI SUPERIORI E AGLI ALUNNI DEL
PONTIFICIO COLLEGIO SCOZZESE DI ROMA****

Lunedì, 3 giugno 1957

The heart of St. Paul warmed with affection and, however oppressing his trials, expanded with joy and consolation, when he could address those of his Christian communities, on whose generous and courageous loyalty depended so mightily the safe-guarding and spread of the Faith he had taught them. We share those paternal feelings of the Apostle, dearly beloved sons, and We are more than ever conscious of them, when We speak to a group like yours. It was then a happy thought of your Rector to ask to bring you here this morning.

Some few of you are priests with the sacred oils almost fresh on your consecrated hands; the rest of you—We speak of the younger men—are preparing for that supremely happy day of ordination, when the mission of priestly cooperation with Christ Himself in the salvation of souls will be confided to you. For that preparation you have come to Rome, come from that far, north country with its glens and lochs, its mist and long, grey spaces that have held your affection since childhood, that perhaps you sometimes dream of. You could have been prepared and well prepared elsewhere. In other seminaries too you could have been formed to that piety, which should characterize every priest—a deep and virile love of God, such as a devoted son for a proud father. How beautifully Christ told His first priests : « the Father loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from the Father » (*Jo. 16, 27*). Your filial love would have been directed also to your Holy Mother, the Church, that brought you forth to the life of grace, and after years of fostering care now looks to you to serve her needs and hopes.

But you have been sent to Rome. Now one must grant that a Roman preparation has something distinctive and precious for minds and souls open to receive of its bounty. The spirit of the early Apostles still lingers beneath the vaulted arches of its basilicas; from countless shrines of saints one hears the hymn of triumph over suffering and death; and memory so easily, so reverentially

slips along the catacombs back to those heroic days when chivalrous courage was the price demanded by the Faith. Close to the heart of Mother Church, jealous custodian of that Faith, under the very eyes of the Supreme Pastor of souls the world over piety is deepened and broadened. And as love of itself is never idle, it will here become for you the mainspring of all your mental and spiritual activities in striving to master those instruments so indispensable for the task ahead. To catechize, to sanctify, to save for an eternity: what a noble, thrilling task it is! It surely deserves the entire dedication, holding nothing back, of your priestly lives.

The College, too, in which you are enrolled, has a history stretching back over three hundred and fifty years, and the story it tells of eminent service for the Church in Scotland is at once a source of pride and a strong appeal to your priestly aspirations. Under the wise guidance of a Rector of long experience and unselfish devotion, assisted by his officials, you will with God's grace answer that appeal with a success worthy of your Alma Mater.

You have come for Our blessing. It will be the blessing of a Father, beloved sons, who in you sees the Church in Scotland of the coming generations. God grant it vigour, growth and holiness. And may the Apostolic Benediction be for you a pledge of those priestly graces so necessary for the apostles of today, and of a generous blessing of God on your dear ones, who have been happy and privileged to offer you to the service of the Church.

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