



# The Holy See

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**ADDRESS OF POPE JOHN PAUL II  
TO THE TEACHERS AND STUDENTS OF THE BOLOGNA CENTER  
OF THE SCHOOL OF ADVANCED INTERNATIONAL STUDIES  
OF THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY**

*Monday, 26 March 1984*

*Dear Friends,*

1. I am very pleased to welcome all of you who come from the *Bologna Center of the School of Advanced International Studies of The Johns Hopkins University*. The unique and challenging educational experience that is yours offers each one of you a marvellous opportunity to grow in an awareness of the vital role that international exchange and dialogue must play in modern society.

As specialized students coming together from various parts of the world, you gather to study the application of contemporary economics, history and political science to the problems of the United States and Europe. Yet the information and ideas which you discuss have clear repercussions on the current situation and the future destiny of peoples and nations throughout the world.

I am happy to be with you today, since it gives me the occasion to share with you my conviction on the importance of an international encounter like the one in which you are engaged: important not only as a way for you as individuals to acquire advanced technical learning in preparation for your professional careers, but also important for the *commitment* that it represents, a commitment *to fruitful dialogue* as a means of achieving mutual understanding among peoples and a stronger sense of universal solidarity.

2. The Catholic Church, while never overlooking the material prerequisites for peace and integral human development, lays special emphasis upon the spiritual and moral conditions necessary for bringing the hopes and aspirations of humanity to fruition. At the same time, she acknowledges that any attempts to unite peoples and nations together in ever closer cooperation will be faltering

unless there prevails everywhere a deep sense of brotherhood which renders dialogue a permanent objective.

A constructive initiative toward achieving this goal is the program in which you are now participating. Through your examination and comparative analysis of international economic and political systems you can learn to understand better the evolution of various theories and systems, and at the same time, to evaluate with greater objectivity the socio-economic factor at work in today's world.

However, as you engage in this complex and technical field of learning, I would encourage you never to forget the *ultimate aim* and final purpose of your research: namely, the promotion and protection of *the dignity of the human person*. This is certainly a deeply Christian perspective. In this regard, I should like to recall my remarks on this subject in an address in 1979 to the XXXIV General Assembly of the United Nations Organization: "... the fundamental criterion for comparing social, economic and political systems is not, *and cannot be*, the criterion of hegemony and imperialism: it can be, and indeed it must be, *the humanistic criterion*, namely the measure in which each system is really capable of reducing, restraining and eliminating as far as possible the various forms of exploitation of man and of ensuring for him, through work, not only the just distribution of the indispensable material goods, but also a participation, in keeping with his dignity, in the whole process of production and in the social life that grows up around that process" (Ioannis Pauli PP. II, *Allocutio ad Nationum Unitarum Legatos habita*, 17, die 2 oct. 1979: *Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II*, II, 2 (1979) 535).

3. As humanity pursues this end, I strongly believe that its re-education must be, above all, spiritual and religious. Moral foundations must be laid in which all peoples put aside mutual suspicions and unite to form an international community with common duties and common goals.

I invite you today to strive to realize these noble aims through their application to your various fields of expertise. In this way you will make a significant contribution to the advancement of a more genuinely human society, one that is founded on justice and crowned with charity.

In conclusion, I wish to extend a special greeting to the President and the Provost of the Johns Hopkins University, the Dean of the School of Advanced International Studies as well as to the Director and the Professors of the Bologna Center Program. I offer you my encouragement for your own dedication to higher learning, especially as it emphasizes the dignity of each human person and fosters fraternal cooperation for the betterment of peoples everywhere. Your presence here today is much appreciated.

And may God bless all of you and your families.

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