



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO BISHOP MAKARIOS OF LAMPSAQUE
AND TO THE RECTOR AND STUDENTS
OF THE CHAMBÉSY INSTITUTE
FOR ADVANCED STUDIES IN ORTHODOX THEOLOGY**

Tuesday, 29 June 2004

*Your Excellency,
Distinguished Rector, Dear Students,*

I am delighted with your visit to Rome for study and information in the context of following up the contacts established several years ago between the Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, at whose headquarters is located the Institute for Higher Studies of Orthodox Theology, and the Catholic Committee for Cultural Collaboration which is part of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. I remember with gratitude my Visit to the Centre and the long and effective collaboration with its first Director, Metropolitan Damaskinos. You are welcomed with joy to this city of Rome, and I hope that the spiritual dimension of your visit and your encounter with the great tradition of faith, nourished by the Church of the Apostles Peter and Paul, will enable you to discover all that we share in our 1,000-year old endeavours to proclaim the Gospel of Christ.

Your visit will also give you the opportunity to meet those in charge of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, as well as other Dicasteries of the Holy See and the Pontifical Universities. These different interviews encourage mutual knowledge. Thus, the "time for meeting and sharing the gifts of each one on the basis of a mutual objective knowledge and deep familiarity" (*Audience with the Members of the Management Council of the Catholic Committee for Cultural Collaboration with the Churches of the East*, 18 January 2003; *L'Osservatore Romano* English edition, 29 January, p. 5), will be ever more clearly discerned.

This, your Institute's first visit to Rome "for study and information", coincides with the 40th anniversary of the historic encounter between Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras I in Jerusalem. I thank the Lord who made a gift to his Church of this marvellous witness of brotherhood, and I encourage you to work to make the commitment assumed in the Land of the Lord a firm duty for everyone. In this same spirit, I rejoice in the visit to Rome of His Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew. It is a new landmark in the dialogue of charity, whose dawn was so clearly portrayed in Jerusalem. You may rest assured of the sentiments of friendship with which the Bishop of Rome welcomes you and asks God to pour out upon you an abundance of his Blessings.