



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF PAUL VI
TO THE STUDENTS OF THE ISTITUTO PIO XII**

Wednesday, 28 April 1971

We extend a special welcome this morning to the students of the Istituto Pio XII, from Florence. The name of your institute and of Villa Schifanoia brings to Our mind many associations. We immediately think with gratitude of the graciousness of Mr. Myron Taylor whose generosity brought about your institute's foundation. It was his intention to found a school which would help give to its students a Christian formation in an institute of a religious character and would open up before them the splendid opportunities of studying art in a Florentine environment. This goal and challenge which he envisioned is indeed one that is worthy-today as yesterday-of youthful energy.

Art itself is an expression of the spirit and becomes a language in which there is a communication of those values that supersede the senses. Art is in its finality a search for God.

For this reason We speak of the necessity of a religious formation for the artists of this generation. It is only the Spirit of God that can adequately "teach us to understand the gifts that God has given us" (1 Cor. 2: 12). We repeat to you the words that the Second Vatican Council spoke to the artists of the world: "Do not close your mind to the promptings of the Holy Spirit", and We willingly extend to you its "message of friendship and greeting, of grace and blessing".