

Paul VI, Pope, 1397-1973.  
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**On the Role of the  
CATHOLIC  
UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE**

**Two Addresses**

**POPE PAUL VI**

**January 3, 1964**

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**ON THE ROLE  
OF THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY GRADUATE  
POPE PAUL VI**

*Address given to a group of Italian University Graduates  
January 3, 1964*

It is fitting for us to greet in the language of a teacher this assembly that previously we greeted and shall greet in ritual language.

Liturgical action allows us, rather suggests to us, this change from sacred language proper to that which is discursive and instructive: from prayer to reflection and conversation.

***Greetings to the Different Groups***

We take advantage of this to welcome each of the groups that are part of this assembly. Let us first mention, therefore, the participants to the eleventh National Congress of the Youth Tourist Center: we are very happy to welcome you, beloved youths, and to express our satisfaction to the promoters of your organization and of your activity.

Some of them have been known to us for sometime and we know with what spirit they have originated and promoted youth tourism animated by a Christian sense, and with what constancy, dedication, permeation into the pedagogic, social, cultural, moral, recreational excellence of youth tourism, in a word, we know how bravely they have worked, so that, here before God, we feel obliged to praise their efforts and to encourage an activity which responds to the customs of our times and is so promising for a modern and Christian formation of our youth.

The presence of these members of the assembly, the affection we hold for them, the importance of their plans, the seriousness of their aims, should deserve a special speech. However, if lack of time and the nature of this See do not allow us to do so, may it suffice them to know how happy we are for this meeting with them, how sincere is our wish for the good outcome of their assembly, and how affectionate is our blessing for them and their good activity.

We must also greet the group of nuns who are technical Assistants to Catholic Action Young Women, who have come to Rome for a course of study and updating: their fervor is known to us; we know the goodness of their services and we thank them from our heart, while at the same time we bear them particularly in mind at this hour of prayer and benediction.

Also admitted to this holy ceremony is a notable group of regional, provincial and zonal leaders of the Italian Catholic Union of High School Teachers, together with their regional ecclesiastic advisers.

We know of the good that this union has set out to do and we appreciate the activity it promotes, the needs which it answers, the results it achieves: let us also extend to these valiant champions of the Christian spirit in the school, our affectionate greeting and warm encouragement.

We say the same to the other faithful and pilgrims admitted to this holy function.

Our greeting goes forth next to the Italian Catholic graduates, who are gathered in Rome for their annual congress: we owe it chiefly to their loving insistence and to our desire to prove to them our particular benevolence, to have included this solemn liturgical celebration on the eve of our pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Thus, may our Catholic graduates here present and those whom they represent here know how dear this meeting is to us, even though it may cause a bit of anxiety to our modest person in whom, for the first time, they wish to acknowledge and honor the formidable apostolic office to which Providence has called us.

May they know how unchanged remains in our heart the friendship that links us to many of them and that fills our heart with esteem and faith in their movement.

May they know how hopefully we look to the place and activity they have assumed in the Italian Catholic field and how we pray to God, particularly at this Mass, for all their spiritual, organizational, cultural and apostolic growth.

### *The Pope and Graduates*

Dear Catholic graduates: We will tell why your movement is of such lively interest to us outside of affective reasons that spring from many remembrances on our part as to its origins and vicissitudes.

It is because we see in you cultured men, trained by the best schools of our country, men who, once the university courses ended, did not terminate their studies, professionally and generally, and who have continued to think, to individualize the problems of our times, to define, to solve them, at least conceptually in the light of those Christian principles in which—whether during the university years, whether in succeeding years, in those of the full experience of life—you are used to recognize the source of the truth of the highest wisdom.

(You are) men who comprehend the dignity and needs of culture; men who never tire of learning and reflecting and who are never doubtful of possessing the connecting thread of the vital truths.

Furthermore, you are industrious, practical men. It is not only a speculative ability, as a remaining bulwark honored by the school years, that characterizes you. You are also characterized by an operative ability, that of your specific profession, that of activity, which to nearly all of you is intense and weighty, dutiful, from which you receive your bread and that of your families as well as the place you occupy in society.

(You are) positive men, we could say, projected into the temporal realities, men true and modern, and let us add, also brave and good men.

Now, we derive deep interest from the fact that living men as you are—characterized by your respective secular activities—profess in like manner and jointly our religion; pray and endeavor to pray in serious and elect manner, and do not doubt, in fact desire, to draw from the sources of religious truth and of grace their profound spiritual life.

Also from the fact that such men are faithful to the Church of God, not through occasional and formal respect, but by means of a stout heart, as sons, as members that know and love; who do not deny before society their Catholic Faith, in fact they practice it; give evidence of it, uphold it with simplicity and character, with humility and force if necessary, and who, by living everyone's life, that of the laity, say that they find in their adherence to the same Catholic Faith an irreplaceable nourishment, an un-failing comfort, thus they recommend it to others and try, as much as possible, to uphold and spread it in its higher principles, in its more serious requirements, in the environments where life has placed them.

It is by this fact, in short, so simple to state and yet so complex to define, that men like you call themselves, and are, Catholics.

This is the reason of our good will and esteem for you; because you represent a phenomenon which the religious and moral crisis of our society puts in significant evidence: you are graduates and you are Catholics; therefore you are at an eminent level in the social scale, not so much because of the honor that derives to you therefrom, but rather because of the duties that pertain to you and because of the responsibility which you must meet; you bring to the said level your firm and serene adherence to Christ and to his Church.

This is the place, this is the time when such adherence must, in the silence of your heart, engage each of you, and must be expressed, as this holy meeting intends, by evident confirmation.

An extrinsic circumstance which at once acquires inner significance urges the Movement of Catholic Graduates to

fix such a definition into consciences and aims.

This circumstance derives from the fact that we find ourselves in the Basilica of St. Peter which, to all of its spiritual inspirations now adds that of being fitted as the hall for the ecumenical council.

We know that you have chosen as the subject of your congress the ecumenical council. And this is why the exterior circumstance offers motive to strengthen the merit of the analysis, just mentioned, of your characterization.

This is a two-term definition that seems to interpret one of the characteristic problems of the ecumenical council, that of the laity in the Church of God and their present apostolic function.

### ***The Laity in the Church***

You know that our doctrine recognizes participation of the faithful layman in the spiritual priesthood of Christ and therefore his ability, in fact his responsibility in the exercise of the apostolate which has resolved itself into different concepts and forms adequate to the possibilities and nature of the life itself of the layman, absorbed in temporal realities, but furthermore his is an apostolate that imposes itself as a mission proper to the present times.

We speak of "*consecratio mundi*" (consecration of the world) and there are attributed to the layman special prerogatives in the sphere of the earthly and secular life, a sphere for the possible spreading of the light and grace of Christ, precisely because he can act over the secular world from within, as a direct participant in its make-up and experience, while the priest, who is to a large extent separated from secular life, cannot, generally, exert influence over it except in an external way, through his words and ministry.

This observation is becoming increasingly important the more we become aware that the secular world is, we might almost say, simply the world, and that it neglects having normal and active relations with the religious life which does not easily succeed in making its salutary voice heard

in the immense zones of the secular life itself.

Thus we have also spoken of the Catholic laity as a "bridge" between the Church and society, which has become almost insensitive, not to say diffident and hostile, with reference to religion and also simply with reference to Christianity and its very basic principles.

Our Catholic laity is vested with his function, which has become extraordinarily important, and in a sense indispensable; it acts as a bridge. And this is not to insure an interference on the part of the Church, a control in the field of the temporal realities and in the framework of the affairs of this world, but in order that our terrestrial world be not left without the message of Christian salvation.

That function entrusted to the laity is not a properly qualified ministry, but an activity shaped in most diverse ways, aimed at establishing contacts between the sources of religious and secular life. We could speak, in approximately expressive terms, of contacts between the Church and society; between the ecclesial community and the temporal community.

The more so the ecclesial community is restored and becomes concentrated in the conscience of the faithful and in the exercise of their specific activity, the less the temporal and secular community can enjoy the benefits of the Christian religion, that would also be intended for it.

Dualism can be stressed to such a point as to make of the ecclesial community a closed cénacle on the one hand, remote from the society in which it too finds itself and paralyzed in its doctrinal, as well as pedagogic, charitable and social efficiency; rendering, on the other hand, the secular world insensitive to religious problems, the greatest problems of life, and therefore exposed to the recurrent danger of believing itself to be self-sufficient, with all the sorrowful consequences which this illusion finally entails.

The bridge is necessary. And you, the Catholic grad-



uates, are the bridge. Not you alone, because many of the faithful in the Catholic laity, whether or not organized, fulfill this function, that of placing the religious life of the Church in communication with the secular life of temporal society.

### *A Higher Unity*

You particularly, we were saying, are more apt to determine in yourselves the duplication of psychology which is claimed as belonging to the ecclesial society and to temporal society.

We must be conscious of this two-fold citizenship; and while ordinarily the Catholic layman pays no attention to it, and adheres without difficulty to one or the other, you are better able to experience in your soul and then in your exterior behavior, what an important thing it is to simultaneously belong to two distinct societies that in our times have so greatly vindicated their reciprocal autonomy and have so greatly developed respective means of thought and action so different from each other.

To be both the faithful and the laity provokes today a characteristic spiritual problem, difficult to solve, though of great fecundity and of great merit.

It is, we think, your problem, which surely must be resolved into a higher unity, in a genial and harmonic synthesis, but that now poses itself with increasing sensitivity and at times a certain inner discomfort, because everyone understands that the solution cannot be found in suppressing one of the two terms in question, precisely when they come in conflict: the faithful layman cannot forget that he is a man of this world, exactly to remain a participating member in the communion of the Mystical Body.

Neither can the man of this world neglect every memory and every pledge of the Christian conscience in order to be free to devote himself wholly to the demands of his secular profession.

Unity of psychology, of mentality, of conscience, con-

duct, is often instead obtained, in our times, through this unhappy method of simplification of the complex reality of life; a simplification which, after all, is not such, because to suppress does not mean to solve. Problems remain and form the torment of consciences and the disquietude of social life.

### ***The Two Societies***

Here then is your function. It begins in clarifying the ideas that surround such a two-fold society; the "*ecclesia*" society and the "*civitas*" society and in shaping the exact mentality that one and the other respectively require.

It might appear, at first glance, that this could determine in consciences a dualism and almost a contrast. An examination of reality, as well as the experience in general of every good Catholic who is a good citizen, shows that a contrast exists only for those who want to create it, not for those who understand how the germination of psychology, which we mentioned, occurs with reference to societies that are not identical, but analogous, that is to say developed on different planes, which can and must complement each other.

Also how such germination possesses the secret of legitimate freedom of conscience and of action on the one hand and the possibility of infusing in the autonomous temporal framework a dignity and a wealth of moral energies which it could not achieve by itself alone.

It is thus that your function unfolds, after having acknowledged the two citizenships, the ecclesial and the temporal, to which it is your fortune to belong, bringing in other words in the professional field your Christian evidence and bringing in the field of the Catholic life your secular testimony.

This last affirmation might appear new and daring, while that of the Christian evidence brought into the secular field has had not few and very beautiful examples, especially where there is mention of the "maturity" of the Catholic laity and of its mission in the present day world.

However, rightly understood, also this assertion relative to the testimony of the temporal life, or better said: relative to knowledge on the temporal life, to be brought by you to the ecclesial sphere, sustains itself very well, to the point of appearing to be what it basically is: that is, a request on the part of the Church to its Catholic laity to be informed on what the laity could say on countless problems of the secular life, better known to the laity than to the clergy.

Yes, you can be the most vigilant signalers, the most diligent informants, the most qualified witnesses, the most prudent counselors, the most sagacious lawyers, the most generous collaborators as to many needs of our world, as to many possibilities to do good, as to many questions, of which your secular life gives you a direct experience and an indisputable competence.

It may be said that from every sector of your professions there can be pointed out to the teaching authority and to the ministry of the Church new, very interesting and ample problems that must not be treated empirically, in the terms of old handbooks, but that need to be considered in the light of systematic and scientific research that the Catholic laity can very usefully provide.

### ***Action as Mission***

As we said, you are the bridge. We could go on recalling how the said function among those most willing is not limited to an external testimony, and to internal information; in reference to some activities it becomes a true proper collaboration in practical needs of great importance: in the scholastic, administrative, legal, social, journalistic, artistic, charitable field . . . How much does the Church expect of you? Last year, during our trip to Africa, we had occasion to visit some small, though well equipped hospitals, directed by doctors and a health staff coming from Italy: Catholic laymen who had decided to devote some years of their youth and profession to Catholic missions!

Needless to say how useful are such services and the moral nobility of such a Christian dedication. Nevertheless,

it does not seem superfluous to us to remind that mission today means all places! Also that the Kingdom of God still suffers today from the condition that placed a delicate, though profound lament on Christ's lips: "The harvest indeed is great, but the laborers are few." (*Matt. 9, 37*).

Of these things the Church speaks also to you today, admirable Catholic laymen, particularly to you, beloved graduates.

Of you and to you the ecumenical council speaks; of the need, not only, that the Church has of you, but the more so of the vocation for the fullness of a Christian life that the Church reads into your souls; of the supernatural elevation that she acknowledges to the faithful whose character bears the sign of brother and soldier of Christ; of the maturity and functions and responsibility to which you aspire in the Catholic field and to which the Church educates and invites you; lastly of the trust that you deserve and that the Church, in blessing you, places in you.

# THE MISSION OF CATHOLIC CULTURE

## POPE PAUL VI

*Address to members of the Italian Catholic University  
Federation*

*September 3, 1963*

The present audience creates for us, and we believe, creates for you, a difficulty, not particularly of protocol, but of psychology; that of finding an attitude of mind in keeping with the nature and aims of this meeting.

The FUCI (Italian Catholic University Federation) is meeting with the Pope; a FUCI that is no longer that of yesteryear, that is to say of over thirty years ago, for the reason that such a long period of time has changed and renewed its ranks many times. Furthermore, the students that today are part of it are different not only in persons, but also in the moral and sentimental peculiarities; different in feeling, in expressing itself, in its problems.

It is a FUCI that does not know its former ecclesiastical assistant who has remained outside of it since he left it and who no longer desires to interfere in its developments.

Those who might remember him among the students of that time, as shown by some faded and amusing photographs, would find it difficult to recognize him now, though the features may not have been changed too greatly by the pontifical robes that he wears.

Thus we do not have a direct and familiar knowledge of you, nor do you have close personal knowledge of us. Nevertheless, we think that each of us feels that the meeting is necessary and desirable; it cannot but be spiritually beneficial; and here is the difficulty which I mentioned: what should the attitude, the form, the spirit, be?

## *Meeting of the Pope with the new FUCI*

Dearly beloved: a propitious remembrance comes to us, that of Pius XI, our great predecessor, who, when the FUCI was still at the beginning of the second period of its existence which was that of an orderly and systematic activity, was so lavish toward it in goodness, in welcome, in support, to become paternally and learnedly its educator and to give rise to pleasant admiration on the part of those who were fortunate to attend his audiences.

If so profound and stately a pontiff was pleased to admit to his school the students of that time, joining the elevation of his teachings to simplicity of manner, the more so can we ourselves shorten the distances of this meeting and solve the difficulty, which we mentioned, in the simplicity of an analogous conversation, which will not afford you, as in the times of Pius XI, the elation of rising to the level of the teacher, but which will give to us the satisfaction of putting ourselves again on the level of the students, of the alumni, and to feel once more among them as their friend and guide, as though we still were the counselor of those past years.

We want to say that the conversation must be open and easy and that, if many things have happened since then, and you yourselves are new to this conversation, at least one thing has not changed, and that is our feeling for the beloved FUCI.

And without attempting to give to our word any official tone or complete outline we now draw it precisely from our heart.

## *Praise of the Ecclesiastical Assistant*

Truly this is not the only thing that has remained from that past period of ours which we cannot at this time forget. There remained, for example, your assistant, who succeeded us and who still remains with you, the excellent and very dear Monsignor Franco Costa, here present, to whom we must publicly express our gratitude for having given to the Federation of Italian Catholic University Graduates his student years (we remember having met him for

the first time in Genoa when he, as president of that Catholic students' association, succeeded in having a memorial tablet of Pope Benedict XV, a former student of the Atheneum of Genoa, placed on the big stairway of the said university; also, at the unveiling of the tablet, when still a student, he delivered a speech which was echoed by the rector of the university).

Later, having become a priest, Father Costa was to give to the Catholic university movement in Italy thirty years of ministry, that have made of him the guide, friend and brother of countless numbers of young students.

This prolonged, untiring, coherent spiritual assistance, has assured the FUCI other elements of continuity that have preserved its original features, and that make it still today recognizable and valuable to one who has not been able to follow its phases of natural development and of proper transformation.

There has remained, next to the ecclesiastical assistant and his valiant colleagues, a magnificent group, a chain, in fact, of friendships, a true society of minds, that has given the nation a network, modest in number, though select in quality, of prepared and generous persons, strengthened by the school of Christian thought, professing the Catholic faith with simplicity and pride, happy to draw from it principles and impulses to use in the service of culture and society.

We are happy to greet here present some excellent champions of such a group!

### *The University and University Life of Today*

Here we should consider the conditions in which your FUCI operates today, conditions new and different from those of yesteryear, such for example, as the increased number of the university population, the development of the university school, the reflection of presentday democratic life upon the university. This, however, is a study into which we do not wish to delve further at this time.

It is sufficient for us to note, rather, some permanent

aspect of your presence in university life. We want simply to note that a method of your own of taking part in university life has been taking shape and is being developed, drawn from the nature of the school itself that lifts knowledge and study to their highest levels and invites the student to go deeper into the basic reasons, which justify the validity not only of the single sciences, but also of the thought that explores and builds them.

The Catholic student finds himself in this respect in a very fortunate situation, which could almost be called privileged; because, from the heritage of truth that his religious faith entrusts to him, he can at once draw that simple and most fruitful nucleus of philosophical postulates that, whether one wants or not, represent the foundation of human rationality, and infuse at once into studies, certainty, trust, consistency, pondering and constructive ability, and make available a repertory of concepts and expressions, that facilitates at the start the formulation of a higher humanistic language and that give to scientific language itself the capability of clear and unequivocal definitions.

This, more than a method, is a program of integrating the specialization of university study into a doctrinal framework, that shall establish some logical relationship with the various and immense fields of human knowledge and preserve to university study an aspiration to unity of knowledge, not placed at once into the immediate, partial, unilateral vision that tempts every scholar of a particular discipline, but at the height of the supreme reasons of knowledge, that have the virtues of synthesis, because they come close to the fountain of truth, no longer just merely known but creative and informative about the universal.

A superb program this, which the student will not be able to unfold by himself and develop completely to its highest point; but a wonderful and providential program as anyone having knowledge of the nature of a university school and one who knows the true conditions of the university of our times can judge.



A program this, that the Catholic student has the credit of drawing up by himself and for himself, thus offering the most priceless contribution that university study and its pedagogy could wish for, that of spontaneous and complementary collaboration in the university school, that of training in deliberation, that of trust in the logic and objectivity of thought, that of ideal, moral and spiritual tension which needs youth in order to live in a beautiful manner the years of the marvelous university springtime that will never return again.

### ***Wonderful and Providential Program***

Your organization, we know, by its study groups, by its courses in fundamental philosophy and religion studied and loved in its authentic and essential forms, by its meetings and congresses, by its aid to those who strive and study the hardest, has by now acquired and developed the method for activation of the program.

And even if, in a field as difficult and wide as university study, what has already been done is always insufficient, the fact that you have preserved the original purpose of the activity of the FUCI, that you have pursued it with intelligence and perseverance, that you have enriched it with magnificent growth, means both conquests and promises for Italian university life, and deserves our satisfaction and praise.

### ***Characteristics of the Catholic University Movement***

We will say more: you have preserved the spirit of the movement. Your spirit is difficult to define though easy to recognize, at least in some principal characteristics, that surely still form the object of your inner consideration and of your jealous care. Among these characteristics we would like to recognize the first, that is to say, love of the university. This love shall not of course be your exclusive prerogative; it will however assume in you an ideal nobility, making it appear at times almost original.

Love of the university, first of all as a higher and sacred institution, as the "alma mater," to which it is a duty and pride to render honor in its authority, in its tra-

ditions, in its edifices, in its constitutional dignity, which cannot but be vested in interior autonomy and in upright liberty, though this must always remain in the moral and civil order that the university wants to be first in representing and promoting.

We have never heard that the FUCI, in its many years of life which were not always happy and peaceful, has ever failed in this fond devotion to the university, for those who rule it, for its honor, for its prosperity. Rather we have had to admit that the ranks of your students have always remained faithful to the intrinsic law of the university, that is, to the pledge of study and thought that it requires in order to be what it is.

Your students have always remained faithful to the spiritual and cultural vocation that the university defines and cultivates in the drama of university problems for the selection and orientation of the paths of thought; have remained faithful to the sense of the seriousness and responsibility of knowledge, to which the university feels itself bound due to its own functions as a higher organ of culture and of the social community.

They have above all remained faithful to the Catholic religiousness that does not alter, does not stifle, but rather awakens, guides and nourishes the search for truth as a supreme goodness toward which the school inclines; and, together with all these things, they have remained equally faithful to the happy and lively expression of the youthful energies that university life knows how to awaken.

### *Intellectual Advancement Enlightened by God*

It might appear that such a concept of university life is too intellectualistic and does not take into account modern tendencies that characterize it at present, or the easier access to it by the young generation of our times, that leans toward a certain scepticism as to the validity of speculative thought, and toward a certain preference for voluntaristic forms of the spirit, or for existentialist decadentism, which has almost become a manner in certain student circles.

These are modes often derived from influences outside

the university, at times from political events or from the literary or mundane ways that do not spring from the genuine requirements of the higher school.

We know, and are happy to repeat, your explanation of the intellectualistic direction that characterizes you: that your intellectualism does not mean a valuable and abstruse cerebralism that demands the creation of closed and utopian clubs, but simply a seriousness of study and of thought to which every true student may aspire.

Rather such a direction is inherent in the intrinsic nature of the university that springs from the activity of intelligence and faith in its conquering capacity, as well as from the basic canon of Catholic spirituality, that evangelically places the light of the Word at the summit of all things.

Such a direction not only represents the mental style of the university student, but the ascetic effort to which he is devoted by vocation and from which he must draw his own ability, which is that of knowing how to study, that of possessing the specific virtues of intellectual life.

Such a direction does not prevent the theoretical principles of knowledge, the truths linked with life, from becoming in the student very vivid inner experiences; Furthermore they infuse in him strong and sound sentiments ready to flower in the exercise of charity and prayer, as well as feelings that are at times tempestuous and sublime, that translate themselves into moral and sentimental imperatives such as to exalt in him generosity in heroic actions and the lyrical emotion of artistic expression. Lastly such a direction presents the problem of culture in its broadest sense for the Catholic university student's consideration.

### *An Incomparable Experience*

The final result of the intellectual training sought by the FUCI is of greatest importance. It is not that the FUCI is the only organization studying this problem; nor may it be said that it is its duty to solve it. However it is up to the FUCI to be aware of it, to know its multiform

aspects, to aid its possible solutions. It is FUCI's responsibility to take full advantage, we were saying, of the best qualified instrument of organized culture, scholastically speaking, that is to say, of the university, the school best equipped to train men for the professions.

Likewise, we were saying, it is the duty of FUCI to educate its members in the upright and profitable use of thought; and it shall also be its mission to initiate those who seek it into the first expressions of their culture, quite an important function this, that would deserve the more to be favored if it were less so by the present conditions of university training.

You know these things very well; to us remains only to encourage you to give to good culture, either humanistic or scientific, the best development possible. We would rather recommend to you to take Catholic culture, to heart as such. You can, above all, explore its treasures; one of the deplorable gaps of contemporary culture is ignorance of religious truths, particularly in their authentic expressions, in the sources, in the traditional heritage of Catholic thought, in the expressions of the ecclesiastical teaching authority.

Such a gap can be filled by the study of religion, made into a valuable synthesizing element of university studies. You can first discover and afterwards reveal the fecundity of Catholic thought, beginning with the elementary observation that the dogmatic enunciation of its basic doctrines, far from halting the dynamic and original development of culture, stirs it and favors it, which is the case of truth armed with security and oriented to life.

You can precisely show how Catholic culture is by its nature directed toward organic manifestations in all of the human sphere: it is not abstract speculation, superfluous and egotistical, but a doctrine that requires, on the one hand, coordination with the moral life of those who possess it and, on the other hand, that requires social dissemination, overcoming the instinctive boundary of individualism, of economic utility, of timidity, of the inability to express

oneself to make of itself a gift to the brothers and light to society.

### ***Mission of Catholic Culture***

Today, more than ever before, Catholic culture needs students and teachers, scholars and writers, artists and apostles; and the FUCI must consider itself as being called to give its willing cooperation in this area.

After all, you yourselves, dear professors and students, are just returning from your Padua congress, and can confirm our observations since the subject of the congress itself was that of "Culture and European Unity," justly defined as one of the most lively topics at the present time.

The very selection of the topic indicates how your concern for culture does not distract you from the historic or social reality in which you are called to live, but rather places you as students and as Catholics in the heart of contemporary life and requires you to view the panorama not as inert or important spectators, but as competent judges and as participants in the world scene, called to exercise with some responsibility the function that is properly yours as persons trained in a living thought and ready to bear witness and to function efficiently.

We are in fact convinced that the great question of European unity is now a duty to be solved in a positive manner—in measure and form that it is not for us to suggest—by the national societies that make up our continent; likewise we believe that it is the duty of every citizen to give in that respect the support of his judgment and of his work, insofar as possible.

### ***Foundations for European Unity***

We are likewise convinced that the solution of the question does require a series of unifying provisions at different levels: economic, technical, military, and political, but also claims the formation of a unitary mentality, the spreading of a common culture; without this, European unity shall not truly be achieved; and when achieved by determined aims, it shall be a sum-total of components

foreign to each other, if not reciprocally opposed; thus an incomplete and fragile phenomenon, if not insincere and insidious.

You have put in evidence this basic aspect of European unification, the need, therefore, for the effective and positive process of such unification to be nourished by a general culture in common and to be directed toward it.

We have furthermore the conviction that the Catholic faith can be a factor of incomparable value for instilling spiritual vitality in the basic united culture that should constitute the dynamic of a socially and politically unified Europe.

Unfortunately, Catholicism extends over only a part of Europe and today Christianity does not reach all. But it is certain, however, that Europe draws from the traditional heritage of the religion of Christ the superiority of its judicial system, the nobility of the great ideas of its humanism and the richness of the vivifying principles of its civilization.

Were Europe to repudiate this, its basic ideological patrimony, it would cease to be itself. Still true is the apparently paradoxical word of the British historian Belloc that establishes an equation between the Catholic faith and Europe. Rosmini in his time had already said something similar. Yours will surely be a positive contribution if you know how to illustrate such a word in the activities of culture and of international contacts, always with due consideration for those who do not have the fortune to share your religious faith, and wisely welcoming the loyal and positive collaboration of others.

### ***United and Coherent in Trust for Action.***

Thus you have learned from the Congress that you now wish to conclude with this audience, what importance and what present value your university movement holds and how, by giving consideration to great prospects and serious matters, beyond its practical effectiveness, the movement faithfully interprets the spirit of youth, the university spirit and the Catholic spirit.

Proceed with confidence. Remain united and be always in accord with your principles and your traditions. Being resolved to make of your movement a lofty, exacting school, determined in thought, prayer and life, you thus oblige yourselves to turn your attention to select groups of intelligent and willing students, who want to overcome the boundaries of mediocrity, of ease, of opportunism, of practical contingencies.

Perhaps you will thus suffer the consequences of qualitative selection; nevertheless, try to concern yourselves as best you can with all of your colleagues of study; do not remain closed within yourselves and secluded from the cultural and social field in which your life takes place; but be understanding, welcoming, desirous of giving to your movement also the approval and joy of number, the ability of drawing closer other social categories, particularly workers and professionals, and to establish relations with Catholic students of other countries, as *Pax Romana* does.

We repeat: proceed with confidence. Do not think that the objective requirements of truth and guardianship with which the Church guides its religious truth, should hamper the freedom of your studies and of your intellectual profession.

Preserve "the love of loyalty" to the Church which has been the glorious prerogative of the FUCI from its inception; preserve as a patrimony which is not heavy to carry but which is a reserve of energy, the example of the best who gave to FUCI a lively, modern and Christian countenance, such as Msgr. Giandomenico Pini, Pier Giorgio Frassati, Igino Righetti, Renzo De Sanctis, Sergio Paronetto, Teresio Olivelli, Carlo Bianchi, Itala Mela, Msgr. Luigi Pelloux, Luigi Scremin, to mention only some of those who have preceded us in the next life.

Be assured that your former counselor follows you with affection, with good wishes, with trust, and with prayer and, in giving to you now his Apostolic Blessing as a pledge of the divine one, still expects much, much more from you.

