



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE 19th ANNUAL
SPRING MARATHON ORGANIZED
BY THE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION OF ROME***

Saturday, 24 April 1999

I cordially greet all of you who are taking part in this traditional "*Spring Marathon*" organized by the Catholic Schools Association of Rome. I extend a respectful greeting to the Mayor of Rome and to the authorities present. I congratulate the organizers and those who this year too have promoted Catholic Schools Day as a time of joy and brotherhood.

I especially greet you boys and girls, who are the real champions of the "*Spring Marathon*". The word "spring" suggests the reawakening of nature and the desire to live; the word "marathon" recalls the dynamism of change and growth. These are the characteristic features of youth. May this happy event, which brings a message of trust and brotherhood through the city's streets, help to create a world where violence is banned and solidarity and peace prevail.

Your programme also reminds me of the many problems Catholic schools must face. I follow their educational work with constant attention and I hope that those in positions of responsibility will listen attentively to their just expectations and give them a favourable response for the good of the whole civil and ecclesial community.

Have a great marathon!

My Blessing to all.