The Vocative Case

The Vocative Case is used to express the noun of direct address; that is, the person (or rarely, the place or thing) to whom the speaker is speaking; think of it as calling someone by name.

In general, the Vocative singular form of a noun is identical to the Nominative singular. It is to be distinguished from the Nominative by its postpositive word position (i.e., it cannot be the first word in its sentence or clause).

Miles fortiter pugnat. = The soldier is fighting bravely.
(Nom.)

Pugna, miles, fortiter! = Soldier, fight bravely!
(Voc.)

Exceptions to the Vocative singular exist in the Second Declension, Masculine, where –us is replaced by –e; -ius is replaced by –i:
Adjuva, **Marcus**, amicum tuum! = Marcus, help your friend!
Fer, **serve**, aquam. = Slave, bring water.

Adjuva, **Lucius**, amicum tuum! = Lucius, help your friend!
Fer, **nunti**, has litteras. = Messenger, carry this letter.

The Vocative plural forms of all nouns are identical to the Nominative plurals. They are distinguished from the Nominative plurals by their postpositive word position in the sentence or clause.

Roma, **senatores**, est in magno periculo. = Senators, Rome is in great danger.