



The Holy See

JOURNEY TO UGANDA

ADDRESS OF PAUL VI TO THE MEMBERS OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF UGANDA

Saturday, 2 August 1969

From its earliest planning, it was Our earnest desire that in the course of this brief visit to Uganda We should come here, to Namugongo. We wished to meet the Anglican Church which flourishes in this country. We wished to pay homage to those sons of whom it is most proud: those who - together with our own Catholic Martyrs - gave the generous witness of their lives to the Gospel of the Lord we have in common, Jesus Christ. For all of them, there is the same inspired word of praise: "These all died in faith, not having received what was promised, but having seen and greeted it from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth" (*Hebr.* 11, 13).

In the Martyrs' spirit of ecumenism, we cannot resolve our differences by mere re-consideration of the past, or judgement upon it. Instead, we must press on in confidence that new light will be given us, to lead us to our goal; we must trust that new strength will be granted us, so that, in obedience to our common Lord, we may all be able to receive the grace of unity.

I The Uganda martyrs were brought together by suffering, and died in faithful witness and hope. They now see, as we must, much to thank God for, "since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect" (*Hebr.* 11, 40).

Among ecumenical enterprises, the Christian Council in Uganda is particularly flourishing. Since there can be no growth towards unity without strong deep local roots, it is Our prayer and, We feel confident, your prayer also, that the spiritual quality of this association may increase as collaboration extends into new fields.

Thus, not only in Uganda, but in all the great African continent, spiritual hunger will intensify to bring healing to that division of which the Second Vatican Council said that it “openly contradicts the will of Christ, scandalizes the world, and damages that most holy cause, the preaching of the Gospel to every creature” (*Unitatis redintegratio*, No. 1). May the Lord bless the work of the All-Africa Christian Conference, as it bends its efforts towards the unity of all Christians!

A notable achievement in Christian co-operation is the common effort among the various confessions to provide readily accessible translations of Sacred Scripture, that rich source from which the minds and hearts of men receive the life-giving nourishment of divine Revelation. As the Council declared, “in the ecumenical dialogue itself, the Sacred Word is a precious instrument in the mighty hand of God, for attaining to that unity which the Saviour holds out to all men” (*ibidem*, No. 21).

This and many other forms of common work in Christ are gathered up in a single resolve. For this is the search we all pursue together, for that true, visible and organic unity which Christ so clearly willed, in order that the world might believe that consummation for which, on the eve of His saving death, He so solemnly prayed to the Father.

In Jesus We express to you, Our Christian brethren, heartfelt greetings and good wishes, in firm and lasting hope, in ardent and sincere charity, invoking rich divine favours and graces.