



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE PAUL VI TO THE NEW AMBASSADOR OF PERU*

Friday, 4 June 1971

Mr. Ambassador,

We have listened attentively to the deferent words you have just addressed to us on presenting the Letters that accredit you as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Peru to the Holy See.

We particularly appreciated your noble expressions on the glorious and century-old Christian traditions of your country, and on the strength of religious life and the work carried out by the Church there in the field of education.

The rich civilization and social structures that the first priests found on arriving in Peru were a fertile field in which the seed of the Gospel took root with unusual rapidity, as a symbol and token of the fruitful flourishing of Christianity that was to take place subsequently. The figures of St. Rose of Lima and St. Martin of Porres, whom Your Excellency mentioned, are admirable expressions of spirituality, which honour your country.

But it is also a motive of special joy for us to be able to say today that these traditions have led, thanks to the wise guidance of the Episcopate, to a living and promising contemporary reality in which the proclamation of the divine Word and the commitment of service to the different communities are being carried out with renewed vigour and a courageous spirit of adaptation to the new necessities and situations, in response to Christian demands and the aspirations of good Peruvian Catholics.

Your Excellency referred to what Government is carrying out and intends to carry out in the social field. In this connection, we can say that the Church, in the order and in the ways characteristic of

her, cannot but desire and work indefatigably for the implementation of a more just society based on solidarity, and of a complete and rapid progress in which every individual and social group will play a part and reap the benefits, both on the national and on the international levels.

In this commitment for social justice and real development, as we mentioned in our recent Apostolic Letter "*Octagesima Adveniens*", which Your Excellency has just quoted. "the Church, in fact, travels forward with humanity and shares its lot in the setting of history° (n. 1). She offers men her teachings, founded on the message of the Gospel, ripened through contact with the changing situations of societies, and nourished by "her rich experience of many centuries which enables her, while continuing her permanent preoccupations, to undertake the daring and creative innovations which the present state of the world requires" (n. 42). For this reason we have made another urgent appeal to Christians, calling them to action, that each one will assume a personal commitment in the common responsibility.

We trust that Peruvian Catholics will respond decidedly to this call in order that a complete development based on solidarity may be reached in your beloved land as soon as possible, in an atmosphere of authentic freedom and Christian brotherhood.

We are glad to respond to the deferent greeting you transmitted to us on behalf of H. E. the President, and to the noble personal sentiments that you expressed to us, by manifesting to Your Excellency and through you to the President of the Republic, our sincere and lively gratitude.

As we formulate our best wishes and assure you, Mr. Ambassador, of our benevolence for the successful accomplishment of your lofty mission, we warmly bestow the implored Apostolic Blessing on you and on the supreme Authorities of your Nation, as well as on the whole beloved People of Peru.

*ORa n.24 p.4.