



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER PAUL VI
TO THE AMBASSADOR OF PORTUGAL
TO THE HOLY SEE****

Monday, 20 August 1974

Mr. Ambassador,

We have listened with the greatest attention to the kind expressions you have just now addressed to Us while presenting your credentials as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Portugal to the Holy See.

Your Excellency's words carry Us in spirit to your dear country which We had the pleasure of visiting on the occasion of Our pilgrimage to Fatima. They have reawakened in Our heart the sentiments of goodwill which We nurture for the beloved Portuguese people whose history is a repository of valiant deeds, considered both humanly and religiously, and of a cultural patrimony strongly coloured by the presence of the Church, welcomed and requited with fidelity.

At present your noble country attracts the attention of the world as well as Our own lively and paternal solicitude. This historic period you are passing through is filled with good hope. It is superfluous to say that We desire with all Our heart that Portugal should meet every kind of good fortune.

Meanwhile, in a special way We hope for two things for the dear people of Portugal so that they may continue along that historic path which has exalted their name among other peoples and which all agree eclipses passing problems: a brotherhood which is lived, founded in liberty, equality, respect, generosity and love among themselves and towards the whole human family; and secondly, a secure and serene peace to allow concordant and continuing efforts of the whole community for increasing corporate development and for a well-being that is shared and cultivated in brotherhood, by each and everyone, in a spirit of harmony.

In establishing this fraternal society capable of eliminating every resentment and distinction and of promoting the understanding, forgiveness and reconciliation on which a constructive attitude can be built leading to increased industrious solidarity and justice, the Church can give valuable help.

And so our thoughts of sympathy and encouragement go naturally to the Catholics of Portugal and their Bishops that they may continue to foster an illuminating and courageous profession of faith which is reflected in the structure and life of the community.

The Church, indeed, inculcating in the conscience noble and elevating ideals by exercising its role of sincere service, and without self-seeking, in evangelizing and in distributing divine graces of which it is the beneficiary, depository and minister, spreads light and communicates moral strengths which go to build up and consolidate, according to the Divine law, the whole human community.

Such a community, as you know, is based on respect for life and the fundamental rights of the human person; and these, together with liberty, ought to provide the spiritual and material elements necessary for full personal fulfilment through a responsible sharing, with freedom of choice and decision, in the collective life.

We are following with lively interest and paternal payers the initiatives regarding your overseas territories so that, through accord based on goodwill, there may be in those regions the guarantee of solid conditions of justice, peace and progress.

Mr. Ambassador, in offering Your Excellency Our cordial welcome, We wish to assure you of Our goodwill and of Our prayer, for the successful discharge of your mission And in the hope of the greatest prosperity for the beloved Portuguese nation, We invoke for it and its Authorities and also for Your Excellency an abundance of God's blessings.

*ORa n.37 p.2.