



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER PAUL VI
TO THE NEW AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA
TO THE HOLY SEE***

Thursday, 28 November 1974

Mr. Ambassador,

We are very glad to welcome Your Excellency today at the presentation of your Letters of Credence as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Venezuela to the Holy See.

Your Excellency's respectful words bear witness to the deep ties with which the Government and people of Venezuela feel bound to this Apostolic See. We also wish to see in that a testimony of gratitude for the task that the Church has continuously carried out in your country, to introduce the divine message of salvation and lead man to fulfil his eternal vocation.

Faithful to Christ's mandate, the Church will continue this work of hers in the repeated determination to serve. She is aware of the conditions of life of modern man, with the deep changes that have taken place on the social and cultural plane, which almost make it necessary to think of a new era in human history (cf. *Gaudium et spes*, 54). This is already in itself a stimulus for everyone to become deeply aware of the meaning and value of the achievements of the present-day world.

But it is no less urgent to channel all these results along suitable ways of communication and participation towards a real promotion of the person, morally and spiritually. It is precisely the person, with his inviolable dignity, who must not only constitute the primary aim, but also serve as the foundation in any process of development. Otherwise this development would merely nourish artificial hopes, based on short-lived perspectives of consumption, with the risk that even the best energies of intelligence and will would be subordinate to inferior aims.

In this connection, we cannot but stress with what care priority has been given in your country to promoting the ideals of peace and justice that ennoble so much an orderly and peaceful society, projected upon a cultural patrimony which reserves and communicates great spiritual experiences from which the whole community must benefit (cf *Gaudium et spes*, 53).

In this context falls also the praiseworthy effort of the Venezuelan Episcopate, supported by authorities, priests and faithful – as Your Excellency stressed in your address – to discern the requirements of the institution of the family. It shows particular interest in cultivating with the greatest dedication this cell of society, in which life is enriched with personal fellowship, much more when it becomes a clear testimony of the sacrament of love between Christ and redeemed humanity

Mr. Ambassador, we do not wish to conclude these words without assuring you of all our benevolence and support for the successful accomplishment of the high mission entrusted to you. And with our sincere gratitude for everything you said to us on behalf of H.E the President of the Republic and Government, we request Your Excellency to convey our best wishes for the prosperity of the authorities and of all our beloved Venezuelan sons, on whom we invoke abundant divine blessings.

*ORa n.50 p.2.