



# The Holy See

---

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS PAUL VI  
TO THE NEW AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF EL SALVADOR  
TO THE HOLY SEE\***

*Thursday, 15 December 1977*

*Mr. Ambassador,*

We are very happy to receive Your Excellency today on the occasion of the presentation of your Letters of Credence as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of El Salvador to the Holy See.

Opening our heart to you now, there arises spontaneously in us a first feeling, which finds expression in a cordial greeting: Welcome, Your Excellency, to this centre of the Church, to which so many Salvadorians look with affection and hope.

Allow us, therefore, to pay a sincere tribute, in your person, going beyond all due courtesy, of special esteem for El Salvador and each of its inhabitants, without any distinction.

The country you represent, Mr. Ambassador, frequently attracts our benevolent thought and our attentive solicitude. We are well aware, in fact, that the vast majority of Salvadorians live their lives with an ideal reference to their Catholic faith and do not forget the many practical implications that this condition involves on the personal, family and social plane. All this raises up a whole set of relationships and expectations to which the Holy See and the Church, faithful to their duty, cannot but give careful thought.

In the first place recognition and praise goes to the commitment of the people of El Salvador to improve their general conditions of life, starting from that global view of man and of humanity that the Church teaches them (cf *Populorum Progressio*, 13).

The Church, on her side, promotes and encourages these aspirations, within the sphere of her specific competence. For this reason, while she claims also in this country the indispensable freedom to preach the faith, teach her moral and social doctrine, and exercise her mission among men without hindrance (cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, 76), she always wishes to respect the competences of the temporal power in its own sphere and to accept a constructive dialogue with the civil authorities, for the purpose of serving better the personal vocation of those who are at once faithful and citizens. The Church, in fact, believes that this is the way to prevent evils overcome a climate of violence that unfortunately, has sometimes caused losses also in the ecclesial field, and construct a social atmosphere in which evident injustices, which prevent all created things from being shared fairly by all mankind "under the guidance of justice tempered by charity" (ibid 69), will be adequately corrected.

Mr. Ambassador, confiding in you these perspectives and hopes, we trust that your mission, which we hope will be very successful and fruitful, will contribute to strengthening a spirit of serene understanding between your country and the Holy See. Meanwhile kindly convey our respectful greeting to the supreme authorities of El Salvador and to all the beloved Salvadorians, for whom we beseech with deep fatherly affection the richest blessings of the Almighty.

---

\*ORa n.52 p.8.