



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II

TO THE NEW AMBASSADOR OF THE PHILIPPINES

H.E. Mr HOWARD Q. DEE

ACCREDITED TO THE HOLY SEE* Tuesday, 9 September 1986

Mr. Ambassador,

IT IS A PLEASURE to welcome Your Excellency today as you present the Letters accrediting you as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Philippines. I thank you for your thoughtful message and for conveying the greetings of your President, Her Excellency Corazon C. Aquino. At the same time I would ask you please to assure her of my own prayers and good wishes for herself and for all your fellow citizens.

It is my fervent hope that the present time will be an important period in your country of planning and realizations that will help forge a more secure and prosperous future for everyone. I pray that there will be a generous response to the challenge of social justice: the need to alleviate poverty, unemployment and underdevelopment, and to construct together a truly just, free and peaceful society.

Since a large percentage of the Filipino people profess the Catholic faith, the Church is in a position to collaborate in many significant ways in the continuous development of your country. The Church, in every country, encourages her members to participate actively in social and political life, and to draw light and energy from the Gospel. In doing this, she wishes to be at the service of the human family in its longing for freedom, justice and peace. She wishes to promote a society which fully respects the rights and dignity of every human person.

However the Church's primary contribution, while not an exclusive one, will always lie in the spiritual realm. She proclaims unceasingly the Good New of salvation and seeks to bring people to know and love Almighty God. She is convinced that this constitutes an irreplaceable service to humanity. For, as I said in my latest Encyclical on the Holy Spirit, "The Triune God... giving himself in the Holy Spirit as gift to man, transforms the human world from within, from inside hearts and

minds".

I was pleased to note your reference to non-violence. In a world which witnesses a spiraling number of acts of terrorism and violence, there is a need to persuade people to use non-violent means to settle disputes and to bring about justice. In this regard we must be convinced of the effectiveness and the wisdom of honest dialogue. As I said in my 1986 World Day of Peace message: "Dialogue is a means by which people discover one another and discover the good hopes and peaceful aspirations that too often lie hidden in their hearts. True dialogue goes beyond ideologies, and people meet in the reality of their human lives. Dialogue breaks down preconceived notions and artificial barriers. Dialogue brings human beings into contact with one another as members of one human family, with all the richness of their various cultures and histories".

Diplomacy is built on a common conviction of the value and need for dialogue and a mutual commitment to further dialogue between peoples and nations. In today's world it is becoming increasingly apparent that no nation can afford to stand alone. We are moving towards greater interdependence within the international community and towards seeing the increasing importance of mutual trust and collaboration.

The work which you are called to perform in your role as Ambassador to the Holy See contributes to these causes. As you begin this worthy undertaking, you can be assured of the assistance and cooperation of the various departments of the Holy See in the fulfilment of your task. And I wish you success and happiness in your work.

May God be with you and may he bless abundantly all the beloved people of the Philippines.

*AAS 79 (1987), p. 255-257.

Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II, vol.IX, 2 pp. 581-583.

L'Attività della Santa Sede 1986 pp. 664-665.

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