



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER
POPE JOHN PAUL II
TO NEW AMBASSADOR OF JAMAICA
TO THE HOLY SEE***

Friday, 22 January 1987

Your Excellency,

It is my pleasure to welcome you today for the presentation of your Letters of Credence as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Jamaica. I am confident that the cordial relations that exist between your country and the Holy See will not only be maintained but also strengthened by your diplomatic mission.

I am grateful for your kind words concerning my efforts on behalf of peace and justice within the human family, and I thank you for the good wishes that you have extended to me in the name of the Government and people of Jamaica. In an increasingly interdependent world, in which the hopes of mankind as well as the dangers threatening it are so great, the Holy See seeks to promote international dialogue and understanding based on the fundamental human values which all people share as children of God created in his image and likeness.

At a time which offers great potential for technological, social, cultural and economic advancement, nations must not lose sight of the fact that development must be morally grounded and ethically pursued if it is to be development that is truly worthy of our human dignity. If we are to enjoy true justice, then no nation or people must be deprived of the good things that our stewardship of God's gifts can produce for the betterment of humanity. If we are to enjoy true peace, no nation or people may be excluded from full participation in the social, political and economic life of the human family.

Likewise, if people are to free themselves from the destruction of war and threats of war, and from

the economic burdens imposed by excessive arms production and the arms trade, nations must first learn how to live in peace within their own borders and then with other nations. The possibility of disputes and competition ought not to plunge the world or any part of it into senseless violence, nor lay waste to the human and economic resources that could be more productively employed in other ways.

Your diplomatic mission is at the service of greater human understanding and cooperation. You represent the interests of your nation in the widest possible sense: the Jamaican people's desire for peace, for a just and equitable share of the world's economic benefits, for a voice within the family of nations, for universal respect of human life and dignity. The national motto of Jamaica to which you referred, "Out of Many One People", not only serves as a constant reminder of the need to build and preserve unity, but also provides inspiration for the Jamaican people to set the world an example of social harmony based on mutual respect.

I am pleased to note your words concerning the very positive contribution of the Catholic Church in Jamaica to the building up of national life, particularly in the fields of education, health and social welfare. By bearing faithful and dynamic witness to the Gospel in word and deed, the Church challenges her members and all people of good will to seek justice and to foster mutual love, reconciliation and understanding, so as to ensure an even better future for the Jamaican people and for all mankind. The Church constantly seeks, to renew herself in the light of her mission and to draw strength from the vision of what she is called to be by her Divine Founder and Lord. In doing so she also bears witness to the profoundly moral and religious foundations upon which nations must be built if they are to succeed in renewing their vision and sense of purpose with respect to the common good and the fundamental dignity and rights of each and every person.

Finally, Your Excellency, as you undertake your important responsibilities, I wish to assure you of the full cooperation and support of the Holy See. I likewise assure you of my fervent prayers for yourself and your work. May Jamaica prosper with God's help, and serve as an example to all those who seek a more human and peaceful world.

*AAS 80 (1988), p. 1170-1171.

Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II, vol. XI, 1 pp. 154-156.

L'Attività della Santa Sede 1988 pp. 62-63.

L'Osservatore Romano 23.1.1988 p.5.

L'Osservatore Romano. Weekly Edition in English n.5 p.5.

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