



The Holy See

JOURNEY TO UGANDA

ADDRESS OF PAUL VI TO THE DIGNITARIES AND REPRESENTATIVES OF ISLAM

Friday, 1 August 1969

Dignitaries and Representatives of Islam,

How can we express Our deep satisfaction in meeting you, and Our gratitude to you, for granting Our lively desire to greet, in your persons, the great Moslem communities spread throughout Africa? You thus enable Us to manifest here Our high respect for the faith you profess, and Our hope that what we hold in common may serve to unite Christians and Moslems ever more closely, in true brotherhood.

It gives Us pleasure to salute also the Representatives of the Indian and Pakistani communities, which have found, in this country, a fraternal welcome.

In our prayers, We always remember the Peoples of Africa, for the common belief in the Almighty professed by millions of them must call down upon this Continent the graces of His Providence and Love, most of all, peace and unity among all its sons, We feel sure that, as Representatives of Islam, you join in Our prayer to the Almighty, that He grant all African believers that desire for pardon and reconciliation so often commended in the Gospels and in the Koran.

Our pilgrimage to these holy places is not for purposes of prestige or power. It is a humble and ardent prayer for peace, through the intercession of the glorious Protectors of Africa, who gave up their lives for love and for their belief. In recalling the Catholic and Anglican Martyrs, We gladly recall also those confessors of the Moslem faith who were the first to suffer death, in the year eighteen hundred and forty-eight, for refusing to transgress the precepts of their religion.

May the shining sun of peace and brotherly love rise over this land, bathed with their blood by generous sons of the Catholic, Christian and Moslem communities of Uganda, to illuminate all of Africa! And may this, Our meeting with you, respected Representatives of Islam, be the symbol of, and first step towards, that unity for which God calls us all to strive for His greater glory, for the happiness of this blessed Continent!