



The Holy See

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

Saturday, 13 January 1973

Mr Ambassador,

We are happy to welcome you and to receive the Letters of Credence by which His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie I accredits you as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Holy See.

We thank you for the gracious message of good wishes which you bring on this occasion from the Emperor and the people of Ethiopia and for the kind words which you have spoken in our regard.

His Imperial Majesty is well known to us: we have met him here in Rome and in Geneva. We know how eminent he is among the leaders of Africa and how his wise counsel has oftentimes served the cause of peace on the continent. We are equally aware that in the international forum the Emperor is a dedicated promoter of the interests and rights of developing nations, and we cherish a sincere regard and esteem for him.

It is hardly necessary for us to speak of our own profound interest in the problems of development. The efforts of the Catholic Church in Ethiopia, especially in the fields of education and medical care, testify to the seriousness of that interest and concern. We would express here our gratitude for the benevolence with which His Imperial Majesty regards the work and institutions of the Catholic Church in his country.

It seems to us only natural that the friendliest of relations should exist between Ethiopia and the Holy See, by reason of the history of Ethiopia's Christian tradition. We admire that tradition, stretching as it does into the distant past and discernible today in the great ancient monasteries that keep silent watch over the heights of the vast Ethiopian mountains, guarding the secrets of centuries in their contemplation of the Word of God, in their beautiful liturgy, in their treasures of religious art and manuscripts enriched by the living experience of Christianity.

We appreciate too the spirit of understanding and ecumenism which this deep religious sense has fostered, and we look forward to a harvest of mutual friendship and cooperation between your country and the Apostolic See.

Finally, we pray that God will bless His Imperial Majesty, his family and all the beloved people of Ethiopia with every gift of prosperity, peace and happiness.

To you personally, Mr Ambassador, we extend our best wishes for the happy accomplishment of your mission.

*AAS 65 (1973), p.41-42;

Insegnamenti di Paolo VI, vol. XI, p.39-40;

L'Attività della Santa Sede 1973, p.24-25;

ORa n.4 p.2.