



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER PAUL VI
TO THE AMBASSADOR OF MALTA ACCREDITED TO THE HOLY SEE****

Monday, 1 October 1973

Mr. Ambassador,

We wish to manifest to you our warm gratitude for the noble words you have just addressed to us on presenting the official Letters that accredit you as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the State of Malta to the Holy See.

In the kind expressions addressed to our person, in your tones of full adherence to the Holy See's mission of peace, as well as in your references to the ties of centuries-long faithfulness that unite Malta with the centre of Catholicism, we perceived the echo of the sentiments of the beloved Maltese people, and their firm resolution to develop more and more, through the words of Your Excellency, the cordial relations existing between Malta and the Holy See, relations which – as you declared in a very significant and happy expression – go far beyond the mere formality of an exchange of Ambassadors.

This atmosphere of cordiality and mutual confidence which has now been so happily established, should not surprise us if we remember the importance that Malta had for the defence of Christian civilization for many centuries, and if we think of the deep influence that the teaching of the Gospel has had on the life and institutions of its people. Moreover the fine achievements in the educational, charitable, pastoral, missionary fields, in which the Catholic faith of your people is still manifested, are there to testify with the eloquence of facts to the nourishing vitality of the Maltese Church.

This is its motive of sincere joy for us. And it is also, it seems to us, a certain guarantee for a future of peace and real progress for your island. The Church, in fact, by causing the spirit of the Gospel message to penetrate more and more deeply into the customs of a people and its civil

organization, cannot but strengthen, among children of the same country, brotherly union, mutual collaboration, and esteem for those spiritual values which are at the basis of public tranquillity and all moral and social progress.

We know, Mr. Ambassador – and your words have clearly confirmed it to us – that your nation intends to offer active collaboration in the great and universal problem of peace. In this noble effort, know, Mr. Ambassador, that Malta will find valid support and full understanding in the Holy See. We can assure you, too, of our constant benevolence towards all those efforts that the country, under the leadership of its rulers, is making, albeit in the midst of inevitable difficulties, to achieve orderly development, through the implementation of real social justice.

With these sentiments we are happy to give you our most cordial welcome today: and while we express good wishes for the fruitful accomplishment of your lofty mission, we willingly impart to you and your dear country our Apostolic Blessing.

*ORa n.42 p.4.