



The Holy See

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE PAUL VI TO THE AMBASSADOR OF CHILE*

Saturday, 6 April 1974

Mr. Ambassador,

We have listened with great attention to the respectful words that Your Excellency has just addressed to us in this presentation of your Letters of Credence, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Chile to the Holy See.

Your Excellency's words have made us feel nearer in these moments to your country, so dear to us and well-remembered, with its deep religious and moral values and its vast historical and cultural patrimony, bound up beyond any doubt, in its contexture and expansion, with the centuries-old presence of the Church.

This country which can pride itself on a long civic and cultural tradition, directed towards a face and just common life, always characterized by a marked sense of respect and human tolerance, has recently gone through a crisis – the most dramatic one in its history, as Your Excellency indicated – with sufferings that have moved world public opinion. Just because it is a people that has suffered and is suffering, our feeling of deep affection goes out to it more keenly and solicitously. We followed this crisis with fatherly anguish when it loomed up threatening; it filled our heart with the pity invoked by the bloodshed of sons. We have not ceased nor will we cease to follow with the same deep and fatherly solicitude the problems and difficulties that still exist.

What could one who, like us, has the mission of a universal fatherhood, so loving and at the same time so compromised, desire for the Chilean people, as also for the other peoples? Two prime and invaluable goods for every kind of human and Christian society: brotherhood and peace. A brotherhood which, overcoming animosity and resentment, excluding revenge or vendettas, aims at re-establishing a genuine and mutual understanding by means of a real and sincere

reconciliation; a peace solidly constructed on the safeguarding of life, moral and material goods, and the fundamental rights of all persons, which is an indispensable condition to promote real social progress, beneficial for all – especially for the poorest – and to which everyone can make a free and conscious contribution.

In this sense the Church is making a new effort, offering her disinterested and sincere service within the local community, because she knows that everything she contributes to serene common life, justice and the promotion of operating solidarity is a precious help for the human being who, no one must forget, bears within him the divine stamp.

In the accomplishment of her mission, she will continue to imbue consciences with these ideals of betterment, in absolute faithfulness to the principles of the Gospel, lavishing particular care on the neediest. In this connection we wish to testify to the fruitful work accomplished by the Chilean episcopate with really ecclesial interest and generosity, in order to foster the responsible profession of faith and reflect it with all its postulates in the sphere of personal, family and social life, carrying out at the same time wide-scale welfare work to aid those in need.

Mr. Ambassador, expressing to you our cordial welcome, we wish to assure you of our benevolence for the accomplishment of the high mission entrusted to you. Requesting you to transmit to the supreme Chilean authorities our appreciation of their respectful greeting, we invoke the best divine blessings on Your Excellency and on all your beloved nation.

*ORa n.17 p.4.