



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO H.E. Mr JOSÉ CUADRA CHAMORRO
AMBASSADOR OF NICARAGUA TO THE HOLY SEE***

Monday, 24 September 2007

Mr Ambassador,

I am pleased to receive from your hands the Letters accrediting you as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Nicaragua to the Holy See. As I thank you for your kind words, I offer you a most cordial welcome at this solemn ceremony. It marks the beginning of the mission entrusted to you by your Government, one which you also carried out in the past between 1997 and 1998.

Please convey to Mr Daniel Ortega Saavedra, President of the Republic, my best wishes for peace, well-being and prosperity for his beloved Nation, recently so harshly tried by Hurricane Felix. As I did then, I address prayers to the Almighty for the human victims and I express my spiritual closeness to the numerous injured who have lost their homes or work implements. It is to be hoped that in addition to internal help, they will receive generous contributions from the international community.

Like many other countries, Nicaragua has to face various financial, social and political problems. Finding the means to solve them is no easy task, although it can rely not only on the good disposition and collaboration of citizens but especially on that of leaders of the various political and commercial bodies. Furthermore, concerted efforts and a common will are indispensable to make decisive action by leaders possible, in order to confront the challenges of a globalized world which they must tackle with a spirit of true solidarity.

This Christian and also human virtue, my Predecessor John Paul II said, must inspire the action of individuals, government leaders, members of international agencies and institutions as well as all members of civil society, who must feel committed to working for an authentic development of

peoples and nations, keeping the good of each and every one as their goal, as Catholic social doctrine teaches (cf. *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, nn. [40-41](#)).

In your address, Mr Ambassador, you referred to the priorities identified by your Government, such as the implementation of the "Hunger Zero" project and of measures to combat the drug problem, to increase literacy and to eliminate poverty. To achieve these goals and thus reduce the gap between those who have everything and those who lack the basic necessities such as education, health care and housing, transparency and honesty in public management are fundamental. When dealing with any form of corruption, these qualities will increase the Authorities' credibility among the citizens and are crucial for a just development.

With regard to these objectives, civil leaders will find in the Church in Nicaragua, despite the paucity of her means, sound principles inspired by the Gospel and sincere collaboration in the search for just solutions. It is also essential to recognize the Church's efforts to increase the awareness and responsibility of Nicaraguan citizens by encouraging their participation and involvement to meet the needs of those who are often steeped in poverty and marginalized.

Bishops in your Country, taking into account the national and diocesan structures and faithful to their strictly pastoral mission, confirm their willingness to maintain dialogue and constant and sincere communication with the Government. Thus, they help to ensure the essential conditions that foster true reconciliation, establishing an atmosphere of peace and authentic social justice. Nevertheless, "The direct duty to work for a just ordering of society, on the other hand, is proper to the lay faithful" (*Deus Caritas Est*, n. 29), who must develop their political activity as a "social charity". I spoke on this topic [to the Apostolic Nuncios in Latin America at a meeting with them last 17 February](#) (cf. *L'Osservatore Romano* English edition, 28 February 2007, p. 3).

The Holy See would also like to express its gratitude to Nicaragua for its stance at the multilateral forums on social themes, especially respect for life when it is confronted by considerable internal and international pressure. In this context, it should be considered as very positive that last year the National Assembly approved the abolition of therapeutic abortion. It is indispensable, in this respect, to increase State assistance and the help of society itself for women who have serious problems with their pregnancy.

Together with the inevitable theme of life, there is an urgent need to recover and promote the human and moral values threatened by so many forms of violence, even in homes. This violence is frequently the result of the break-up of the family or debasement of customs. The Church in Nicaragua is well aware of this sad reality. She endeavours to face it with her teaching and pastoral programmes, but the intervention of public institutions, with appropriate educational programmes that refer to the organization of social life, are also necessary.

Mr Ambassador, at the end of this ceremony, I would like to express to you my best wishes for the

success of your mission, and may it help to strengthen the good, traditional bonds of agreement and cooperation between Nicaragua and the Holy See. Please convey my greeting to the President of the Republic. I shall remember the entire Nicaraguan People in my prayers through the intercession of Sr Maria Romero, the first and widely loved woman Blessed of your Country. I ask the Most High always to help you in your mission which begins today, while I invoke abundant Blessings upon you and your collaborators as well as on the Government Authorities and citizens of Nicaragua.

*ORa n. 42 p.4.

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