



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO H.E. Mr NIKOLA IVANOV KADULOV
NEW AMBASSADOR OF BULGARIA TO THE HOLY SEE***

Saturday, 31 October 2009

Mr Ambassador,

I am happy to welcome Your Excellency on this solemn occasion of the presentation of the Letters accrediting you as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Bulgaria to the Holy See. I thank you, Mr Ambassador, for the kind words that you have addressed to me. In return, I would be grateful if you would express my cordial good wishes to the President of the Republic, Mr Georgi Purvanov, for himself, as well as for the happiness and success of the Bulgarian people.

For my part, I am pleased about the good relations between Bulgaria and the Holy See, within the dynamic created by the Visit of my Predecessor [Pope John Paul II](#) to your country in 2002. These relations must be further intensified, and I was glad to hear you express your intentions to work assiduously to strengthen them and to widen their scope.

This autumn, we will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall which allowed Bulgaria to make the choice for democracy and to recover free and autonomous relations with the rest of the European Continent. I know that your country today is making significant efforts towards even stronger integration into the European Union of which it has been a part since 1 January 2007. It is important that in the process of building Europe, no people should sacrifice its own cultural identity, but rather find the means to make it bear good fruit to enrich the entire community. Because of its culture and geographical situation, it is particularly fortunate, as you said, that your nation is not only concerned about its own future, but pays great attention to its neighbouring countries and is working to promote their relations with the European Union. Without doubt Bulgaria has an important role to play in the construction of peaceful relations with the nations that surround it, as well as in the defence and promotion of human rights.

As you have also underscored just now, this concern for the common good of peoples cannot be limited to the frontiers of the continent. It is also necessary to create the conditions for successful globalization. In order to achieve this in a positive way it must be able to serve "the whole man and all men". It is this principle that I wished to stress forcefully in my recent Encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*. Indeed, it is essential that legitimately sought development not concern only the economic domain, but take into account the integrality of the human being. The measure of man does not lie in what he possesses, but in the fulfilment of his being according to all potential implanted in his nature.

This principle finds its ultimate reason in God's creative love, which is fully revealed in the divine Word. In this sense, for the development of man and of society to be authentic, it must necessarily involve a spiritual dimension (cf. nn. 76-77). It also requires on the part of all public authorities a great moral demand on themselves so that they may exercise the authority entrusted to them in an effective and disinterested manner. The Christian culture which profoundly imbues your people is not just a treasure of the past to be preserved, but also a pledge for a truly promising future in which it will protect man from the temptations that always threaten to make him forget his own greatness as well as the unity of the human species and the need for solidarity that it implies.

This intention inspires the Catholic community in Bulgaria in seeking to promote the whole population. This shared concern for the common good constitutes one of the elements which should facilitate dialogue among the many different religious communities which make up the cultural panorama of your ancient nation. This dialogue, in order to be sincere and constructive, requires reciprocal knowledge and esteem that the public authorities could greatly facilitate by the respect that they themselves have for the different spiritual families. For its part, the Catholic community expresses its wish to be generously open to everyone and to work with everyone. It demonstrates this concretely through social work whose benefits it does not limit to its members alone.

Through you, Mr Ambassador, I wish to extend my warm good wishes to the Bishops, priests, deacons and all the faithful who make up the Catholic community in your country. I ask them to consider the great wealth that God, in his abundant mercy, has placed in the hearts of believers, and for this reason, to engage boldly, and cooperate as closely as possible with all citizens of good will, in order to witness to the dignity that God has inscribed within man's being at every level.

As Your Excellency is officially beginning your office at the Holy See, I express my best wishes for the success of your mission. You may rest assured, Mr Ambassador, that you will always find among my co-workers all the attention and cordial understanding that your lofty office requires, as well as the affection of the Successor of Peter for your country. As I invoke the intercession of the Virgin Mary and Sts Cyril and Methodius, I pray the Lord to bestow generous Blessings on you, your family and your co-workers, as well as on the Bulgarian people and its leaders.

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