



The Holy See

***ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO H.E. MR. BOGDAN TĂTARU-CAZABAN
NEW AMBASSADOR OF ROMANIA TO THE HOLY SEE***

Thursday, 21 October 2010

Mr Ambassador,

I am glad to welcome you this morning at the time when you are presenting the Letters accrediting you as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Romania to the Holy See. I thank you for your cordial words to me. In my turn I would be grateful if you would kindly convey my warm good wishes to H.E. Mr Traian Basescu, President of Romania, for his own and the Romanian Peoples' happiness and peace. Through you, I also greet the Government and all the Authorities of your country. Likewise, I wish to extend a brotherly greeting to H.B. Daniel, Patriarch of the Orthodox Church of Romania.

Twenty years ago Romania decided to write a new page of its history. However, so many years lived under the yoke of a totalitarian ideology have deeply affected the attitude of individuals in political and economic life. After the period of the euphoria of freedom, your nation undertook with determination a process of rebuilding and healing. Its entry into the European Union was thus an important milestone in the effort to achieve an authentic democracy.

To pursue this renewal in depth, a number of new challenges need to be met in order to prevent your society from being based solely on the search for well-being and the lure of profit—understandable consequences of a period of more than 40 years of deprivation. Naturally, it is only right that integrity, honesty and rectitude should prevail in the first place. These virtues must inspire and motivate all the members of society for a good management. In guiding the citizens, they effectively will contribute to regenerating the political, economic and social fabric in the increasingly complex contemporary world.

Romania is a mosaic of peoples. This variety could be regarded as an obstacle to national unity but it may also be seen as enriching the country's identity, of which it is a feature. It is therefore right to ensure that each individual has a legitimate place in society, going beyond this variety while also respecting it. Dealing with the heritage left by Communism is difficult because of the disintegration of society and of the individual, which it fostered. The authentic values, in fact, were overshadowed to the advantage of false theories that were idolized for reasons of State.

Today, therefore, it is a question of engaging in the difficult task of the just ordering of human affairs by making good use of freedom. True freedom implies the search for truth and goodness and it is achieved, precisely, by knowing and doing what is appropriate and right. In this process of rebuilding social links, the family has pride of place. Every effort must be made to enable it to carry out its basic function in society. With the family, it is important to set in place an educational system that encourages the young generations, giving them a formation to which they are entitled while respecting and nurturing their ability to transcend the limits within which people sometimes wish to constrain them.

In the presence of great ideals, young people will aspire to moral virtue with an open considerate outlook for others through compassion and goodness. The family and education are the starting point in order to fight poverty. They also contribute to respect for each person, to respect for minorities, to respect for the family and for life itself. They are the soil in which the fundamental ethical values are rooted and in which religious life can develop.

Mr Ambassador, Romania has a long and rich religious tradition that has also been wounded by the dark decades and some of these wounds are still open. They consequently ask to be healed by means that are acceptable to each one of the communities. It is in fact right to make reparation for the injustices inherited from the past without being afraid to do justice. For this reason it would be right to encourage a process that can take place at two levels: at a State level, in other words by encouraging an authentic dialogue between the State and the different religious leaders, and, second by encouraging harmonious relations between the different religious communities of your country.

I acknowledge the successive Governments achievement in establishing relations between the Catholic Church and Romania. I mention with pleasure, among others, the resumption of our reciprocal relations whose 20th anniversary we are celebrating. I likewise took note of the new Law of Cults that you mentioned in your address. There is also a body for encounter, the Joint Commission established in 1998, whose work it would be appropriate to reactivate.

For her part, the Catholic Church wishes to continue making a specific contribution to your nation, both by pursuing the construction of Romanian society and in the desired dialogue with all the non-Catholic Christian communities. In this regard, she sees ecumenical dialogue as a privileged path for meeting her brothers and sisters in the faith and for building God's Kingdom with them,

while respecting the specificity of each one.

The witness of brotherhood between Catholics and Orthodox, in a spirit of charity and justice, must prevail over the difficulties and must open hearts to reconciliation. In this area, the numerous fruits resulting from the historic visit that Pope John Paul II made about 10 years ago, the first to a nation with an Orthodox majority, should strengthen the commitment to dialogue in charity and truth, and the promotion of joint initiatives.

Such a constructive dialogue will not fail to serve as a leaven of unity and concord, not only for your country but also for the whole of Europe. On this happy occasion, I would also like to greet warmly the Bishops and faithful of the Catholic Church in Romania.

At the time when your mission is beginning, I offer you, Mr Ambassador, my best wishes for the noble task that awaits you, as I assure you that you will always find with my collaborators an attentive welcome and cordial understanding.

I wholeheartedly invoke upon you, Your Excellency, upon your family and upon your collaborators, upon all the Romanian People and upon its leaders, an abundance of God's Blessings.

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