



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
FOR THE PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIAL LETTERS
BY THE AMBASSADORS OF
ETHIOPIA, ZAMBIA, TANZANIA, BURUNDI, QATAR AND MAURITANIA
ACCREDITED TO THE HOLY SEE**

*Clementine Hall
Saturday, 8 June 2024*

[[Multimedia](#)]

Your Excellencies,

I am pleased to welcome you for the presentation of the Letters by which you are accredited as Ambassadors Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of your countries to the Holy See: Ethiopia, Zambia, Tanzania, Burundi, Qatar and Mauritania. I would ask you kindly to convey to your respective Heads of State my greetings and sentiments of esteem, together with the assurance of my prayers for them and for your fellow citizens.

As you take up your new responsibilities, I would like to reflect briefly on three words that can guide your service: *family, hope* and *peace*.

First, *family*. The nations you represent have their own unique histories, cultures, traditions and identities. At the same time, they are part of the one human family. Indeed, the image of family, applied to the international community, is a fitting one, for “families are the first place where the values of love and fraternity, togetherness and sharing, concern and care for others are lived out and handed on” (*Fratelli Tutti*, 114). The noble work of diplomacy, on both the bilateral and multilateral levels, aims to promote and enhance such values, for they are indispensable to each person’s authentic and integral human development, as well as to the progress of all peoples. In this perspective, I encourage your efforts and those of your governments to foster the common

good, protect the fundamental rights and dignity of all and strive to build a culture of fraternal solidarity and cooperation.

Sadly, the fabric of the family of nations is today torn by the tragedy of civil, regional and international strife. We have only to think of what is taking place in Sudan, Ukraine, Gaza and Haiti, to name but a few examples. At the same time, we are witnessing multiple humanitarian crises that result from such conflicts, including a lack of access to adequate shelter, food, water and medical supplies. Then, too, we must be attentive to the problems of forced migration and the increasing number of internally displaced persons, the scourge of human trafficking, the effects of climate change, especially upon the poorest and most vulnerable, and global economic imbalances that contribute to a loss of hope, especially among young people. As well, the decline in the birthrate, experienced by many countries, is a cause for grave concern. In view of such challenges, it is essential to undertake a far-sighted, constructive and creative dialogue, based on honesty and openness, in order to find shared solutions and strengthen the bonds that unite us as brothers and sisters within the global family. In this regard, we must also bear in mind our obligations to future generations, asking ourselves what kind of world we want to leave to our children and those who will come after them.

The answer to that question involves the second word, *hope*. Hope is the central message of the forthcoming Jubilee Year that the Catholic Church will celebrate beginning on 24 December next (cf. *Bull of Indiction of the Ordinary Jubilee of the Year 2025*, 9 May 2024). In the face of uncertainty about the future, it is easy to become discouraged, pessimistic and even cynical. Yet hope leads us to recognize the goodness present in our world and provides the strength needed to meet the challenges of our day. For this reason, I like to think of you, dear Ambassadors, as signs of hope, because you are women and men who seek to build bridges between peoples, not walls. The lofty responsibilities you exercise are a reminder that common ground, mutual understanding and concrete expressions of social friendship are all possible. In this regard, I trust that your mission will contribute not only to the consolidation of the good relations existing between your nations and the Holy See, but also to the building of a more just and more humane society in which all are welcomed and given the necessary opportunities to advance together along the path of fraternity and peaceful coexistence.

Indeed, *peace* – the third word I would offer you – is “the fruit of relationships that recognize and welcome others in their inalienable dignity” (*Message for the 57th World Day of Peace*, 1 January 2024). Only when we set aside indifference and fear can a genuine climate of mutual respect that leads to lasting concord grow and flourish. Your presence here is an eloquent sign of the resolution of the nations you represent and of the international community as a whole to address the situations of injustice, discrimination, poverty and inequality that afflict our world and hamper the peaceful aspirations of present and future generations. It is my hope that in exercising your role as diplomats you will always strive to be peacemakers, those who are blessed by the Almighty (cf. *Mt 5:9*).

Dear Ambassadors, as you begin your mission to the Holy See, I offer you my prayerful good wishes and I assure you of the constant readiness of the Secretariat of State and the other Dicasteries and Offices of the Roman Curia to assist you in the fulfillment of your duties. Upon you and your families, your co-workers and all your fellow citizens, I cordially invoke an abundance of divine blessings. Thank you!