



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF POPE JOHN PAUL II
TO THE NEW AMBASSADOR
OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
TO THE HOLY SEE***

Thursday, 7 July 1983

Mr Ambassador,

I am pleased to accept the Letters accrediting you as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Philippines, and I thank Your Excellency for the courteous words of greeting and good wishes which you have just now spoken on behalf of the Philippine Authorities and in your own name.

You have referred to the warm and close relations existing between your country and the Holy See. I assure you that the Filipino people occupy a special place in my thoughts and in my heart. The existence of these close ties is a source of real joy. First, because they are an appropriate expression of the multiple bonds of faith, culture and history which unite so many of your fellow citizens to the See of Peter, the rock on which the Saviour built his Church. Secondly, because these relations are the expression of the Holy See's affection and of its expectations with regard to the role of the Philippine nation in the social, cultural and religious development of the vast continent of Asia.

In the context of this simple ceremony with which you inaugurate your mission, I am pleased to recall a thought which I expressed in my message to the Second Special Session of the United Nations devoted to disarmament: ". . . peace . . . means the renewal of what is best in the heart of man, the heart that seeks the good of the other in friendship and love". In its own way such a reflection can be applied to relations between the Holy See and the Philippines.

The Church, of her nature, is committed to the task of renewal in the hearts and minds of men and

women everywhere. While she employs her own specific means for fulfilling this task, means which have been bestowed on her by her founder, she seeks to work alongside and in close collaboration with civil institutions at the service of peace and progress, and in harmony with all those men and women of good will in the various fields of human activity who have responsibility for the public life of the nations. In this perspective, diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the various Governments is part of the Church's service to the human family, and indeed part of her ministry of peace.

The art of diplomacy, Mr Ambassador, is the art of peace and progress through dialogue and negotiation. In this respect your role as Ambassador of your country to the Holy See takes on a particular character: its object and exercise is closely connected with the promotion of the essential truths and values that constitute the foundation of just and harmonious relations between individuals and between nations, the truths and values related to the dignity of man and his fundamental inalienable rights, which must be universally respected if our world is truly to enjoy the benefits of peace and justice. May Divine Providence enlighten you in the fulfilment of your task!

As I welcome Your Excellency as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Philippines to the Holy See I gladly invoke the fullness of God's graces upon the President and the other Authorities of your nation, and upon all the beloved and fondly remembered Filipino people.

*AAS 79 (1987), p. 255-257.

Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II, vol. IX, 2 pp. 581-583.

L'Attività della Santa Sede 1986 pp. 664-665.

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