



# The Holy See

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**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II  
TO H.E. MR. DHURMA GIAN NATH,  
NEW AMBASSADOR OF MAURITIUS TO THE HOLY SEE\***

*Monday, 25 March 1985*

*Mr Ambassador,*

It is indeed a pleasure for me to welcome Your Excellency here this morning and to accept from you the Letters of Credence accrediting you as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Mauritius. I am grateful for the warm good wishes that you have brought from His Excellency the Governor-General and from the Prime Minister, and I ask you to convey to them the assurance of my own.

I have noted with satisfaction your reference to the historical presence of the Church in Mauritius. The early Catholic missionaries came to your country, inspired by an ardent zeal for the Gospel of Jesus Christ and a sincere concern for the spiritual well-being of all Mauritians. Their primary purpose was to proclaim the Good News of salvation, bearing witness to the fact that each human person is made in the image and likeness of God. You have mentioned Blessed Jacques Laval, who eminently embodies the generosity, courage and charity of those heroic men and women of faith. Father Laval's labours to relieve the distress of the slaves is well known, and indeed he is often referred to as "the Peter Claver of modern times". This same spirit of fraternal love is still present today in the educational, medical and charitable endeavours of Catholic clergy, religious and laity in your nation.

I appreciate your Government's willingness to welcome me for a Pastoral Visit to Mauritius. I can only confirm the deep longing of my heart to make such a visit one day, if it be God's will.

As you are aware, while the nature of my Pastoral Visits is primarily religious, these occasions nevertheless afford me the opportunity of expressing once more the Church's desire to cooperate

with nations in promoting the integral well-being of their citizens. The Second Vatican Council clearly affirmed the complementary relationship that should characterize the efforts of ecclesial and public authorities:

“In their proper spheres, the political community and the Church are mutually independent and self-governing. Yet, by a different title, each serves the personal and social vocation of the same human beings. This service can be more effectively rendered for the good of all, if each works better for wholesome mutual cooperation... For man is not restricted to the temporal sphere. While living in history he fully maintains his eternal vocation” (*Gaudium et Spes*, 76).

I know that the State and the Church in Mauritius have always sought to develop the bonds of collaboration by having recourse to dialogue, and that this dialogue has proved to be fruitful even when difficulties have arisen.

I am encouraged to hear you reiterate the determination of your country to be an active participant in building up a climate of peace in the Indian Ocean. But important as external conditions may be for the future of the world, the only permanent guarantee of peace remains the innermost conversion of individual hearts.

The unity of your nation is a tangible sign that peace can be achieved by a society that is characterized by various cultural, religious and ethnic differences. The harmonious efforts of Mauritians working together for the promotion of the common good can serve as an excellent example for the rest of the world to follow. It is my fervent prayer that your people will be ever faithful to the rich heritage that is theirs.

Your Excellency, I trust that the time of your service here will be a fruitful one. In accomplishing your mission, you may be confident of the constant interest and cooperation of the Holy See. May Almighty God bless you in this work, and may he always pour out abundant favours upon the beloved people of Mauritius.

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\*AAS 77 (1985), p. 955-956-

*Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II*, vol. VIII, 1 pp. 732-734.

*L'Attività della Santa Sede* 1985 pp. 225-226.

*L'Osservatore Romano* 26.3.1985 p.9.

*L'Osservatore Romano. Weekly Edition in English* n.17 p.4.

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